

The Things beyond  
the Tomb

*T. H. PASSMORE, M. A.*

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The things beyond the tomb









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# The Things beyond the Tomb

*In a Catholic Light*

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## Preface

MOST people are interested in the question of what will happen to them after Death. If they are not, they must have something very seriously wrong with them.

I believe firmly that many more persons are curious upon this subject than we are wont to suppose. But they do not talk about it. Perhaps they do not know any one whom they could ask. Or, though they know those who could help them, they may be too shy or too proud to seek such help. Or again, they may be living a bad life. This would cause them to hush up their curiosity within themselves; for their conscience would make them afraid as to what they might hear.

In any case it is hard to believe that there are many people who in their heart of hearts care nothing whatever about the subject. And yet it is the topic above all others upon which people have the vaguest and most mistaken ideas.

For all sorts of wrong notions have sprung up about Heaven and Hell. It is only to be expected that those

should be at sea, who have broken away from the safe anchorage of the Church. But within the pale of the Church there is much ignorance and widespread misconception in regard to these matters.

And it does not seem that very much is done by way of mending the mischief. I suppose the greater number of sermons are wound up, by way of climax, with some reference to Heaven, and the happiness that is there in store for us. But we seldom hear in what this happiness will consist.

It is true that Almighty God has not told us much about Heaven. And even where He has spoken, the line between the letter and the figure is both difficult and dangerous to draw. A Father delights in giving good children pleasures that will take them by surprise, "above all that they can ask or think." But He has given us a sufficient general notion of the nature of the joys we may expect, if we walk in His ways here.

And of the punishment in store for the disobedient He has drawn pictures which, though dark and mysterious, are sufficiently definite to fill us with holy fear of a Being Who is "a consuming fire."

Still more shrouded and partial are the glimpses He has granted us into the state of Christian souls between Death and Resurrection, into the details of the Resurrection and the Judgment, and the events of



the "Last Day." Yet He has told us enough to afford us a general moral certainty as to these tremendous happenings, and their relation to our conduct in this world.

Yes, the darkness that veils the mysterious future is pierced, here and there, with slender rays of light. But these beams are distributed up and down the pages of the written Word, and only the Church may safely dare the attempt to draw them into focus. The scattered Biblical allusions to the Last Things are laborious to collect and compare, and sometimes difficult to reconcile; insomuch that the learner is fain to turn to the Church and say, "How can I understand, except some man should guide me?"

And, according to the light which God has so far granted her, the Church does guide us. It is her office to edit and classify God's written revelation; and if we hearken to her teaching, we cannot go astray. And yet with all deference I would submit, that the Clergy as a body do not declare this teaching, in connection with our subject, as frequently or as plainly as could be wished.

Take the topic of Hell, for instance. In the times before the Catholic Revival this terrible theme figured largely in sermons, and was treated in an unduly material manner, with a view to frightening sinners into repentance. Now, as it would seem, this regrettable fashion has given place, by reaction, to the

opposite extreme, and the subject is politely avoided. The natural consequence is that heresy and infidelity about Hell are rampant; that God is charged with cruelties which He has never threatened, and with injustice which He has never thought; and that the Church is credited with doctrines to which she does not stand committed for a moment.

Still less of clear teaching is there upon the "Intermediate State." This subject involves the notion of discipline and self-abnegation, and therefore, in common with Fasting and the Sacrament of Penance, is not popular in "High-Church" circles. The prevailing dread of anything like Purgatorial doctrine hinders its clerical victims from declaring, in this matter, the whole counsel of God. There is a conspiracy of silence in the pulpit with regard to it, which tacitly encourages, and is in great measure answerable for, the common idea that the Souls of the Departed Faithful are in a state of torpor; and that the notion of prayer, offered either by them, or by ourselves in their behalf, is an impiety.

Neither upon the subject of the Resurrection of the Body do we hear much distinct or explicit teaching; with the result that here, again, erroneous and extravagant notions of the Catholic doctrine prevail. And can we wonder that the very word is in many quarters received with a smile?



It is in view of the afore-mentioned facts that I offer the little work that follows. There are not many Anglo-Catholic books that purport to resolve doubts and answer questions upon these subjects; and such excellent treatises as do exist are in most cases, perhaps, somewhat "above the heads" of very simple or uninstructed people.

It is for this latter class especially that these pages are designed. I hope that they may also be found useful, as a basis of instruction, by those whose work it is to teach the young and the unlearned. I have tried to write very simply indeed, so that a child may understand; and have assumed as little knowledge as possible in my readers. I have aimed to answer popular objections, putting myself in fancy in the reader's place, and anticipating his possible difficulties as they occurred to my own mind. And I have based my instructions as far as possible upon the written Word of God, to show that in this, as in all themes which belong to our most holy Catholic Faith, "Church Doctrine" is "Bible Truth." I beg, therefore, that the book be read *Bible in hand*.

We live in times when religious England is divided into two camps, the friends and foes of the Catholic theory of Christianity. Religious bywords and theological shibboleths are upon the tongue alike of the wise and of the unwise; and the "man in the street,"

usually a Gallio of indifference, has awaked from his apathy, and claims a stall in the market of clashing arguments and conflicting opinions. And the whole controversy of the day resolves itself into the simple question, "*Where shall I go when I die, and by what faith and conduct here can I determine my eternal destiny?*"

I trust that by the blessing of God the following pages may go some little way to meet the mood, and to answer the question.

T. H. P.

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## CHAPTER I.

### THE PLACE AFTER DEATH.

WHEN you die, your soul will not go straight to Heaven or to Hell. "Going to Heaven when you die" sounds good, but there is no such thing.

It could not be. Every soul has to be judged at the Last Day. At that Day it will be seen which place it is fit for. Until then it could not go to either.

It could not go to Heaven, for it must first be judged, and found fit to live with God. Besides, it will want its body in Heaven; and it will not get that till the Resurrection.

Could you imagine an accused person receiving his punishment or acquittal, and then, years afterwards, coming back before the magistrate to be tried? It is quite as sensible as supposing a soul enjoying the bliss of Heaven for ages, and then coming back to the earth to be judged, and to receive its body.

Not even the greatest Saints "go to Heaven when they die,"—or, at least, they do not then reach their

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last and fullest state of blessedness. S. Peter tells us that not even David is yet "ascended into the heavens" (Acts ii. 34). There have doubtless been many Saints and Martyrs of the Church who have gone into a state of blessedness at death. We think of "the Saints" as in Heaven. But they are not finally perfect yet, for they have not their bodies; and besides, we cannot apply to ourselves the case of a holy canonised Saint of the Church, who may have died shedding his life-blood for Jesus Christ.

And it could not go to Hell, any more than a man charged with a crime can be punished before he be tried. It would not be fair.

Therefore it must wait somewhere till the Judgment.

And that is just what it does; and the place where it waits is called by several different names.

It is called in the Bible, at least once, "Paradise." This name generally means Heaven, as in 2 Cor. xii. 4, where S. Paul says he was "caught up into Paradise."

But when Our Lord said to the Penitent Thief, "To-day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise," He must have meant this Waiting Place.

It is also called "Hades," which is a Greek word for "Death," or the place of death.

S. Peter calls it "prison" (1 S. Pet. iii. 19).



It is also sometimes called the "Intermediate State." "Intermediate" means "lying between." It lies between this life and the Resurrection.

And in the Creed it is called "Hell." This is an old Saxon word, meaning a dark or covered place—the "Valley of the Shadow of Death."

Where is this strange realm, where the souls of men wait for the Last Day?

We do not know yet. But the Bible speaks of it as if it were beneath the earth. S. Paul (Eph. iv. 9) calls it the "lower parts of the earth." And Our Lord is said to have "descended" into it.

Still, wherever it is, we know this much about it from the lips of Our Lord Himself—that it is in two parts. One of these parts is for righteous souls to wait in. The other is for the wicked. A Particular Judgment, immediately after death, determines the Waiting Place of each soul.

When the Rich Man and Lazarus died, in the parable, they did not go to the same place. Lazarus was carried by the Angels into a place called "Abraham's Bosom" (the Jewish name for Paradise), where he was happy. But the Rich Man found himself in a place of torment, and thirst, and fire.

They could see each other. But there was between them a great gulf which could not be passed. Each had a foretaste of what was waiting for him when

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at last his soul and body should rise from the dead (S. Luke xvi.).

This was the place into which our Lord's Human Soul descended directly after His Death. He did not go to Heaven; for He said on Easter Day, "I am not yet ascended to My Father." He went to Hell, Hades, or Paradise.

David said (Ps. xvi. 10), "Thou wilt not leave my soul in Hell." This meant that God the Father would not leave our Lord's Soul in Hades, but would raise it (together with His body) from the dead.

But what did our Lord do in Hades?

S. Peter (1 S. Pet. iii. 19) tells us He went and "preached to the Spirits in Prison." These were the spirits of those who had died before Our Lord's time. They were shut up in Hades or Death. All the good people who in the old time had watched and waited for Him, saw Him now, and heard Him preach the Gospel of His Death.

How glad they must have been to see Him! How eagerly they must have listened to all He had to tell them about Himself! Many good men have thought that He brought some of them out of prison into a happier place, giving them already the fruits of His Passion, through that Power of His own Death by which He had conquered death and destroyed its power.

Perhaps He meant this when He once said, "The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live" (S. John v. 25).

In Eph. iv. 8, S. Paul says, quoting Ps. lxviii. 18, "Wherefore He said, when He ascended up on high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. Now that He ascended, what is it but that He also descended first into the lower parts of the earth?" "Leading captivity captive" here means "leading a multitude of captives."

And we are told that at Our Lord's Crucifixion there was an earthquake, "and the graves were opened, and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, and came out of the graves after His Resurrection, and went into the Holy City, and appeared unto many" (S. Matt. xxvii. 52, 53).

Our Lord preached especially to those who perished by the flood in the time of Noah. S. Peter says, "He went and preached unto the spirits in prison; which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah" (1 S. Pet. iii. 19, 20; iv. 6).

Yet the sojourn of Our Lord's Spirit in this place is wrapt in dark and wondrous mystery. Perhaps we shall hear more about it one day, when we go there ourselves.



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In the meanwhile we know that the going there, and the rising thence, gave Death and Hell into our Lord's power. In Rev. i. 18 He says, "I am He that liveth, and was dead; and . . . I . . . have the keys of Hell and of Death."

It would seem that Our Lord, when He rose from the dead, left this place less dark and awful than He found it.

For in the Old Testament, and especially in the Psalms, it is spoken of in the most appalling terms. "Who shall give Thee thanks in the pit?" (Ps. vi. 5). And "there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest" (Eccl. ix. 10).

The Hebrews called this place "*Sheol*," and regarded it as gloomy and dreadful. But Our Blessed Lord did that which made it possible to say, "O Death, where is thy sting? O Grave, where is thy victory?" (1 Cor. xv. 55). No doubt He made it a very different place for Christians, when He "harrowed Hell."

There was another reason for Our Lord's Descent into Hell besides the preaching to the Spirits in Prison.

Our Lord descended into Hell because it was part of death to do so. If He had not done this, He would not have died fully and perfectly. He willed to "taste death" to the utmost, to bear all that death brings with

it, not to the body only, but also to the soul. All men, when they die, will have to pass through the Valley of the Shadow ; and Our Lord did this, searching Death out to the very last, bursting its bonds, loosing its pains, breaking its power.

If you read Ps. lxxxviii. carefully, you will hear in David's words the voice of Our Lord crying to His Father from the depths of Hell. Also in the prayer of Jonah from the whale's belly, in the second chapter of his Book.

And we, Christ's members, knowing that He has been through all this, have nothing to fear from death, if we are living in Him.

Do not fear to die ; fear only to die without God. If you die without God, your death will be miserable, horrible. But if you die a good Christian, your death will be a "falling asleep in Jesus." There is nothing that you will have to undergo in the other world but will be good for your soul. You will be passing through a realm which now belongs to Jesus Christ. He has loosed the pains of death. He will bring you into a place of refreshment, light, and peace. And when the trump of God shall sound, you will rise to that Eternal Life which, by His most Holy and Perfect Death, He has won for your body and soul.

## CHAPTER II.

### THE HOLY SOULS.

MANY English people have fallen into a most unhappy way of looking at Death. They regard it as separating the Soul from all union with those it leaves behind, and putting a stop to the work God is doing with it.

Is this so?

No. If it were so, Our Lord would not have conquered Death, but Death would have conquered Our Lord.

A baptized person, who is being saved, is a Member of the Kingdom of Heaven.

In the Kingdom of Heaven there is no death. That is to say, death does not make the soul any less a child of the Family of God.

A dear friend dies a Christian. We can no longer see, hear, or touch him. He is gone away into the far-off land of the Shadow, and is known no more for a time.

But we shall see him again! He is none the less



our dear friend and fellow-servant. He is no more really parted from our fellowship than if he were gone to some distant place across the world.

Turn to Phil. i. 21-24. You will there find that S. Paul thought so little of death as a separation from his friends, that he actually could not make up his mind whether it would be better to die at once and be with Christ, or to stay yet a few years longer with them in the world.

And in another place (Rom. xiv. 8) he says, "For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord." And again (1 Cor. xv. 19), "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." And (Rom. xiv. 9) Christ is "Lord both of the dead and of the living."

This is called the Communion of Saints. "The souls of the righteous are in the hand" (Wisd. iii. 1) of the same God in Whose hand we are; and "they without us" shall not "be made perfect" (Heb. xi. 40).

You must not think that the dead are in a state of unconscious sleep. They are alive; worshipping, praying, full as ourselves of faith, hope, and love. They have not forgotten us; they pray for us even as they prayed while on earth. It is possible that in some cases they even know what is going on in the world. The "Souls under the Altar" cry in the Apocalypse, "How long, O Lord, . . . dost Thou not . . . avenge

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our blood on them that dwell on the earth ? ”  
(Rev. vi. 10).

If they be in this state, what follows ?

It follows that we are acting very wrongly if we forget to pray for them.

“ Pray for the dead ! What good can that do ? The dead are either lost or saved. A man’s fate is sealed when he dies ; of what use, then, can it be to pray for him ? If he be saved, he is saved. If he be lost, no prayers of ours can recover him.”

All very true. A man’s fate *is* sealed when he dies. If he be lost, no prayers of ours can recover him. His time of probation, or trial, ends with his death. And if in that trial he have been found wanting, we are not told that he will be given any further chance. Therefore, for the lost, prayer would be useless.

But *the Church does not pray for the souls of the lost. She prays for the saved.*

“ How does the Church know who is saved ? ”

I did not say she knew who was saved. But she knows who has been baptized.

“ But it does not follow that because a man is baptized he is saved.”

I did not say it did follow that because a man is baptized he is saved. You *will* get on too fast. He who is baptized is *in a state of salvation*, or *in a condition of being saved*. So says the Church Catechism.

We do not know for certain that he will be saved, for he may fall from grace. Just as a sick man may be *in a state of getting well*. We do not know for certain that he will get well. He may have a relapse and die. So we do not know for certain that the baptized Christian will be saved.

But we do not know for certain *that he will not*. A man may, to our knowledge, lead a very wicked life, and die. A Priest may even have visited him on his deathbed, and have failed to get from him any sign of repentance.

But nobody can be sure that, in his last moments, his heart did not turn to God. None (save, perhaps, a very few) heard the Penitent Thief's cry to Our Lord upon the Cross.

Therefore the Church is safe in praying for all departed Christians.

"But if a man be saved, what good can our prayers do him? He cannot be more than saved!"

Yes, he can. He can be saved quickly, or saved slowly; he can be saved well, or only just saved. God is carrying on, and perfecting, the work of His salvation, in the place of the departed spirits.

Let us see what we can find in the Bible about the condition of that greatest part of the Church, the souls of the departed faithful. I do not want you to pray for the dead without being quite sure that you have

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good reasons for doing so. Let us see if we can lift a little the veil that hides the Christian dead from our sight.

We know five things about these holy souls.

(i.) *That they are at rest from earthly troubles.* We read in the Epistle to the Hebrews, "There remaineth therefore a rest for the people of God; for he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works" (Heb. iv. 9, 10). And in the Revelation of S. John, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours" (Rev. xiv. 13).

(ii.) *That they are expecting, longing for something.* "They cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, dost Thou not judge and avenge our blood upon them that dwell upon the earth?" (Rev. vi. 10).

(iii.) *That they cannot get what they want until the number of the elect shall be made up.* "God hath provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect" (Heb. xi. 40).

(iv.) *That God is carrying on a work with them.* "He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the Day of Jesus Christ" (Phil. i. 6). And "God shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the Day of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. i. 8). And "I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming

of our Lord Jesus Christ " (1 Thess. v. 23). You see S. Paul means that God's work in them is to go on, not until their death, but until the Day, or Coming, of Jesus Christ.

(v.) *That this work, which God is doing with them, is a work of purging from sin and fitting for Heaven.* Our Lord says, "Thou shalt by no means come out thence, until thou hast paid the uttermost farthing" (S. Matt. v. 26). And S. Paul says, "The fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is;" if it be of some precious abiding material, "he shall receive a reward;" if not, "if any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire" (1 Cor. iii. 12-15). Again our Lord speaks of a sin for which the sinner shall not be forgiven, "neither in this world, neither in the world to come" (S. Matt. xii. 32). It seems then, that there are some sins which, though unforgiven in this life, may yet be purged out in the next.

"But," you say, "does not the Blood of Jesus Christ cleanse us from all sin? If I repent of my sins here, and am forgiven, why should I be punished for them in the next world?"

I will try to explain. Let us suppose you have a child, who has badly disobeyed you. You tell him he will be punished. He comes to you and tells you he is very sorry he was naughty, and promises to try and



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do better in the future. You know quite well that his repentance is sincere. And you freely and fully forgive him.

But (if you are wise) *you still punish him.*

If, instead of repenting, he had gone on doing wrong, and had grown up quite disobedient and rebellious and full of hatred for you, you would no doubt have cut him off altogether.

As it is, *you forgive him, but still punish him for that one particular act of disobedience, as it deserves.*

It is like this with God and sinful man. There are two kinds of punishment which lie before every sinner. These are *Temporal Punishment* and *Eternal Punishment*.

Temporal Punishment is the punishment which takes place in this life and in the Intermediate State.

Eternal Punishment is the shutting out of the lost sinner from God for ever and ever.

Temporal Punishment is inflicted for two chief reasons—

(a) For the sake of justice, because sin deserves it.

(b) For the sake of the soul, that it may be purified, learn to be good, and become fit for Heaven.

Eternal Punishment, a very different thing, which we are not now considering, is inflicted for the same two reasons, but in a different way—

(a) For the sake of Justice, because the lost soul has

refused, to the last, to take to itself the Atonement, which would have saved it, and so *deserves* this awful doom.

(b) For the sake of the soul, because—having flatly refused to give itself to God, in spite of His Grace, and cast in its lot deliberately with the devil—it would not enjoy Heaven if it were placed there, and so is become fit only for Hell, its own chosen place.

Now, put Eternal Punishment quite out of your mind for the present, and think only of Temporal. For we are not considering lost souls at all, but souls which are being saved.

The soul that is being saved, then, does not escape Temporal Punishment.

You must not forget that Sin has two parts: *Guilt* and *Weakness*.

Suppose I commit a sin. I repent and confess. I am forgiven by God, whether directly or through His Priest. The *Guilt* of my sin is quite forgiven and put out of sight of God, through the power of the Precious Blood.

But there is something more about my sin which also needs to be put away. That is its *Weakness*.

The Guilt is gone. But there remains behind in me an unholy taste, which will make me want to commit the same sin again. This is the Weakness of the sin, and mere forgiveness does not take it away.

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What is it, then, which takes this Weakness away ?

It is that treatment from God, which we may call *Experience*. It is that dealing with the soul by God, that training of the soul, which sometimes takes the shape of pain. Just as alloy is put in the fire until the dross be quite burnt out, leaving only the gold behind, so I must be put in the fire of Experience, till my taste for sin be cleansed away.

You remember that David committed two dreadful sins—Adultery and Murder. David repented of these sins in that beautiful fifty-first Psalm we sing in Lent. And God forgave David freely and fully, sending His Absolution to him through the prophet Nathan—"The Lord hath put away thy sin" (2 Sam. xii. 13).

But the Weakness of Adultery and Murder still remained in David, and had to be purged out by many great troubles which God sent upon him through his after-life. These troubles kept David from wanting to commit the same sins again. So also S. Paul made the incestuous Corinthian suffer for his sin in this world, that his soul might be saved (1 Cor. v. 5).

All Christians undergo training at the Hand of God here, or hereafter, or both. Temporal Death is part of this training ; and even the Cross does not save us from that.

Have you never wondered what will happen to the millions of average Christians, who have lived what we

might call a "tolerably good" life, neither very good nor very bad? We cannot suppose it likely that they will be lost and go to Hell, for there is much good in them, and God will not "quench the smoking flax" (S. Matt. xii. 20).

And they certainly will not go to Heaven as they are, for it is written of the Heavenly Jerusalem that "there shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth" (Rev. xxi. 27). The defiling things in them must be taken away, before they can get there.

It follows, then, that they must go to a middle state, in which this fitting for Heaven shall take place in them, and God by His training shall purge out of them every foul tendency and every evil desire, as a malignant sore is cauterised or cut away with a lancet. So you see the very fact of the existence of these "middling" people (and they do exist in enormous numbers) in itself demands, and is an argument for, a Purgatory.

There is no reason to suppose that God's methods of dealing with Christians in that middle state will differ very greatly from His ways of dealing with them here.

Many people shudder with pious horror at the very word Purgatory. They completely forget that they are in a Purgatory now.

For every pain or sorrow that a pious Christian suffers in this life is a Purgatory. It is sent to purge

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him from sinful tendencies, and to teach and train him. And that is exactly what the word Purgatory means.

This is the process, then, which will be continued beyond the grave. Now, pious people do not resent this treatment here. Why, then, should they resent it there? How can they, how dare they, resent or shrink from anything that God may do to them?

It is only the comfortable, easy-going Protestant religion, which wants to enjoy Heaven at the least possible cost, that rebels against the doctrine of Purgation after this life. It does not matter that the doctrine is revealed in the Word of God, taught by the Church, and recommended by common sense. It involves obedience, patience, and humility—that is enough; and therefore the natural man rebels against it.

But what saith the Scripture? “Humble yourselves under the mighty Hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time” (1 S. Pet. v. 6).

And now to return to our explanation.

The soul, then, has to be made fit for Heaven. The holiest man that ever lived, dying the holiest death, would not then be fit to appear in the presence of our most holy God. Before we can find our way to Heaven, God must “sanctify us *wholly*” (1 Thess. v. 23) and “preserve us *blameless*.” Before we can get there, we must be what the Bible calls “perfect” (Heb. xi. 40);



that is, we must reach that best state for which we were created, and from which we had fallen.

Now Conversion, though a very real thing, cannot make us "perfect." That which makes us "perfect," that which "sanctifies" us, is that treatment from God which I have called Experience.

A wicked man may repent and be baptized on his deathbed. But do you think he is fit to go straight from that deathbed to Heaven?

Certainly not. His sins are forgiven. But they have soaked his *character* with evil. He must have experience to pass through, before that character can be reformed and made fit to live with God. Just as the Penitent Thief, though he repented with his last breath, and so died "in a state of salvation," had yet to "work out" (Phil. ii. 12) that salvation. And so our Lord said to him, "To-day shalt thou be with Me," not in Heaven, but "in Paradise" (S. Luke xxiii. 43).

Now you are beginning, after this long explanation, to see why the Church prays for the dead. She prays that this training, whatever it may be, which God is giving them, may be quick and thorough and blessed, and that God may grant them perfect rest, peace, and light; that God may give them, together with His whole Church, the joys of His Heavenly Kingdom; that they may grow in holiness and happiness; that they may "go from strength to strength," and that every one

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of them may "appear unto the God of Gods in Sion" (Ps. lxxxiv. 7).

"But is not all this the Doctrine of Purgatory, condemned by our Church in Article XXII.?"

The Article does not condemn the Doctrine of Purgatory. It condemns the "*Romish Doctrine concerning Purgatory.*" That is a different thing. It means the popular teaching on the subject of Purgatory among Roman Catholics at the time when the Article was drawn up.

This "Romish Doctrine concerning Purgatory and Pardons," of which the Article speaks, refers to the Indulgences which were being bought and sold before the Reformation. This sale of Indulgences was a great abuse. It was put a stop to by the Roman Catholic Church herself, at the reforming Council of Trent (A.D. 1545-1563).

But I must explain what the Roman Church means by an "Indulgence."

All that she has formally laid down concerning Purgatory is the following definition of the Council of Trent: "There is a Purgatory, and the souls detained there are helped by prayer, and chiefly by the acceptable Sacrifice of the Altar." This is very true.

But the practical teaching of the Roman Church goes into more detail. It is, briefly, as follows.

Roman Catholics teach that the sinner may receive

by Absolution, through God's Priest, full forgiveness of the guilt of his sins, and full remission of the eternal punishment due for those sins, but that the debt of temporal punishment due for those sins, if not paid in this life, must be paid in the next.

They go on further to teach that there is what they call a "Treasury of Merit," which means, not only the merits of Christ, but all the credit of such good works done by the Saints of the Church, as are "not necessary to salvation." These works are called "Works of Supererogation," that is, works over and above what God *expects* us to do if we want to be saved.

The key, so to speak, of this Treasury is in the hands of the Bishop of Rome, the successor of S. Peter, to whom Our Lord said, "Whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in Heaven." And the Bishop of Rome may make grants of these merits from this Treasury to all persons who have done certain works or said certain prayers ordered by him.

These grants are called *Indulgences*, because they are believed to convey to the persons who receive them an Indulgence from the whole or a part of the punishment due for sin, in the next world. And thus these persons believe themselves to be released from punishment which they must otherwise suffer in Purgatory. Of course the notion that by an Indulgence Roman

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Catholics mean a "license to commit sin" is a simple absurdity.

These Indulgences could at one time be obtained by money paid to the Church. It was the sale of them that first led to the Reformation.

Now the English Church, in common with the rest of the (non-Roman) Catholic world, does not teach this doctrine. She does not deny that there are certain good works, called "Counsels of Perfection," which are more than that which is barely "necessary to salvation." But she neither teaches nor believes that any particular Bishop has the power to give out the "merits" of such works for purposes of the kind I have described. Nor has any part of the Catholic Church, except the Roman, ever believed it.

The English Church admits what the *whole* Catholic Church has always taught, and no more: that she can win from God, by prayer and the pleading of the Holy Eucharist, help, light, and peace for the Holy Souls; not through men's merits, which have no worth with God of themselves, but through the all-sufficient merits of Our Lord's Cross. She neither pretends to know, nor tries to state, the manner and measure of such help. She leaves it by faith to God, in Whose Hand they are.

Therefore she has not used, in her formularies, the word "Purgatory." For though in itself it be a good and harmless word enough, it is apt to be somewhat

misleading, through having been largely bound up with that which is not true.

Yet there is no objection to your using it, if you wish to. I always use it myself, and I think it is a sound and godly word. *Names* matter not much, so long as we believe *doctrines*.

And the word Purgatory is in itself a protest against the later Roman doctrine. For it means a *Purging-state*; and the Roman Church teaches that Purgatory is more than a Purging-state—that it is a Punishing-state, a state in which the Holy Souls must pay a *debt* of punishment, which they owe to God.

Now, as you doubtless know, there are (at least) two kinds of punishment, with hard names:—

(a) *Vindictory* punishment, or punishment inflicted to satisfy the law of justice; and—

(b) *Remedial* punishment, or what I have been calling Experience, for the good of the offender.

The Roman doctrine teaches that the Holy Souls will suffer both these kinds of punishment in Purgatory.

But there is no warranty whatever, either from Scripture or from the belief of the early Church, for the notion that the Christian soul will undergo vindictory punishment after death.

We have been saved from this by the Atonement on the Cross, which was equal to all the vindictory punishment that must otherwise have been suffered



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eternally by those who will thereby have escaped it. The vindictory punishment after death is Hell, not Purgatory, and is for the wicked, not for saved Christians. The Christian has no "law to satisfy," for he does that in Christ, Who Himself made reconciliation for him.

Therefore whatever he undergoes in Purgatory will be of a *remedial* nature—that is, for his own good and purging. And the Church does not want to *remit* this remedial experience, or to "let her children off" it, or to pray for its lessening. That would be to pray that God's purposes with their souls might be hindered, and to wish to interfere with His work.

She prays rather that it may be thorough, and speedy, and successful. For she knows that "whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth;" and that "if we be without chastisement, then are we bastards, and not sons" (Heb. xi. 6, 8).

This is what S. Augustine meant, when he said (*On the City of God*, bk. xxi. ch. 13) that "some endure punishment in this life, others after death, others both now and then, and yet before that most terrible Judgment." And in some very ancient Liturgies prayers are offered for the dead as being then in a state of suffering or punishment.

The Church, then, does not try to define this treatment

which God gives to the Holy Souls. There are places in the Bible where it seems to be spoken of as "fire." S. Paul (1 Cor. iii. 13-15) says that "the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is;" and that if any man's work, which he has built upon the One Foundation, Jesus Christ, "shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet, *so as by fire.*" This may refer to the General Judgment at the Last Day.

But if, as seems most likely, it refers to the purgation of the soul in the Intermediate State, it is of course a figure of speech; as we cannot think of God cleansing bodiless souls by actual fire. It means the treatment by which God will burn away our sins and follies, and will refine and purify us, even as silver is "purified seven times in the fire" (Ps. xii. 7).

It has been beautifully thought that this fire is the *Love* of God; the burning Love which cleanses from all stain, the burning desire of the soul to be nearer to a God Whom it now knows to be so lovely, the burning shame for past sins which it now sees in their true and dreadful light. "Every branch in Me that beareth not fruit He taketh away; and every branch that beareth fruit, He purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit" (S. John xv. 2).

Of one thing we are quite certain, "there shall no *torment*" (no evil influence) "touch them" (Wisd.

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iii. 1). They are "in the Hand of God." There is nothing to fear for them, and all to hope.

To shrink from, or to belittle, what God has told us He will do to us for our good, would be to show but poor faith in Him. We don't want to *scrape* into the Kingdom of Heaven. We don't want to be saved in the easiest way. We want to be saved in God's way.

Whatever God may do with the Holy Souls will be for their good. For He is perfectly just and perfectly merciful. And what little He has told us of their state, He has told us, not to sadden our hearts, but to quicken our spiritual life. Joyfully will they endure God's dealings with them ; for "the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day" (Prov. iv. 18).

*"Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord ; and let light perpetual shine upon them."*

## CHAPTER III.

### PRAYER FOR THE DEAD.

Now that you better understand the object of Prayer for the Dead, let us see if we have any authority for it.

I ought not to have to waste paper in defending so simple and obvious a thing. It really lies, not with the Church to give her reasons for a practice which has been hers from the first, but with those who object to that practice to state on what grounds they do so.

Yet, though perhaps it is as much hated by many people as anything the Church does, I never heard or read one sensible argument against it.

It is the most natural and common-sense thing in the world. I believe that many simple faithful people, who know nothing about the *doctrine* of the thing, are in the habit of praying for their dead friends as a matter of course. Why not? Why should a Christian be outside the reach of prayer because he is in the land beyond the grave?

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I remember a Priest telling me that once, after he had been preaching on this subject, a poor old woman said to him, "Well, sir, I've prayed for my poor dead husband these fourteen years, but I never heard any one say that it was *right* before."

It might be asked with S. Paul, "Doth not even Nature itself teach you?" (1 Cor. xi. 14). Take the case of a very ignorant and simple person. He knows nothing about the state of the faithful dead, beyond the fact that they hope, like himself, to get to Heaven. But he believes in God and loves Him, and is in the habit of praying.

That person loses a dear friend. Do you not think that, if he be left alone, he will pray for that friend? I should think that it is the first thing he will do.

If he think at all, it will be thus: "My dear friend is dead; but he is not done for. He is going to rise again. I don't know where he is now, or anything about him. But I am sure God is still looking after him. Why should I forget him in my prayers? I will go on asking God to take care of him, as I have always done."

Quite right, my good fellow. And here the Church steps in, and shows you *how* and *why* you are to pray for your friend.

Let me show you plainly that you are right in doing so.



In praying for the dead you have the sanction—

(i.) Of Our Blessed Lord.

(ii.) Of the Apostles.

(iii.) Of the Catholic Church in general.

(iv.) Of the English Church in particular.

i. *Prayer for the Departed had the sanction of our Lord.*

“How can you tell that? He never said a word about it!”

No, He did not. That is the very reason why I say it had His sanction.

If He had disapproved of it, He *would* have said something about it.

For the Jews of Our Lord's time were in the habit of praying for their dead. There is a Book called the Book of the Maccabees, which describes events of the two centuries before Our Lord was born. In this Book we are told (2 Macc. xii. 43) that the great Judas Maccabeus made offerings and prayers for his companions slain in battle: and that it is “an holy and good thought” to make “reconciliation for the dead, that they may be delivered from sin.”

And the Jews even now pray for their dead.

Therefore there can be little doubt they did so in Our Lord's time.

But Our Lord said never a word about it, though He spoke often of the dead.

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Therefore He must have approved of it, for otherwise He would have spoken against it, as He often spoke with terrible sternness against many things the Jews did that were wrong.

ii. *Prayer for the Dead had the sanction of the Apostles.*

They never said a word against it. And S. Paul prays for his dead friend, Onesiphorus. "The Lord grant unto him that he may find mercy of the Lord in that day" (2 Tim. i. 18). Onesiphorus was plainly dead. For S. Paul sends his salutation, not to the man himself, but to his *house*; and speaks of him as though his good works were ended (vv. 16, 17).

iii. *Prayer for the Dead has the sanction of the Catholic Church.*

The early Fathers of the Church taught and practised it. I will name three—S. Chrysostom, S. Ambrose, and S. Augustine. And *all* the very oldest service books of the Holy Communion contain prayers for the dead.

iv. *Prayer for the Dead has the sanction of the English Church.*

In the long prayer, "O Lord and Heavenly Father," in the Communion Service, the Priest prays "that we and *all Thy whole Church* may obtain remission of sins." This strong expression, *all Thy whole Church*, of course includes the departed.

And in the Burial Service we ask God that "we, *with all those that are departed in the true Faith of Thy Holy Name*, may have our perfect . . . bliss."

You may ask why there is not more, and plainer, prayer for the Dead in our Prayer-book?

The answer is, that at the time of the Reformation, when the Prayer-book was drawn up upon the old English service-books, there was in England a large and strong party of men who had taken refuge from the Continent. These men had little or no reverence for the ancient faith and worship of the Church; and if they had had their own way altogether, there is no saying what harm they might not have done to our Prayer-book. As it was, they succeeded in spoiling the Book of much that was good and beautiful and true.

That is why we have lost the plain and straightforward Prayers for the Dead, which might have been preserved for us. And we must thank our good English Bishops for standing firmly by such as we have.

When does the Church remember the Dead particularly?

At the Celebration of the Holy Eucharist. This is the one great Offering which is offered, first and foremost, *for the whole Church*. It is the memorial of that Cross, which alone makes all men perfect.

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Therefore, it has special power with God on behalf of the souls of the faithful departed. It is sometimes offered specially for their sake. And when you are present at this most Holy Service, you may make a special remembrance of the faithful dead.

There is no other Communion of Saints besides this of which I have been telling you.

People have been trying to invent a new kind of Communion of Saints, called Spiritualism. Many persons, called "mediums," make this their trade. They will hold meetings in dark rooms, and the supposed spirits of dead persons will appear, and talk to those they have known in life.

This is often thought to be a new and very wonderful thing. But it is not. It is as old as the world. It is, at any rate, as old as the twenty-eighth chapter of the First Book of Samuel, where Saul went to see the Witch of Endor raise Samuel's ghost.

And S. Paul foresaw it clearly. For he says (1 Tim. iv. 1), "The Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the Faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils."

We cannot settle the matter off-hand by simply saying, "It is fraud." There can be little doubt that things are seen and heard, at these meetings, which are not of this world. Though many Spiritualists are

mere tricksters, I know from personal experience that Spiritualism is capable of being a supernatural reality, and a very sad and horrible one.

These sights and sounds, then, must be caused by one or other of three kinds of beings. They must be caused either by Angels, Departed Spirits, or Devils.

How can we judge between the three?

Take our Lord's plan. "By their fruits ye shall know them." What do they do and say? Do they help people to get nearer to God? Do they tell us anything of the spiritual world, that can profit us?

No. They play musical instruments, upset furniture, ring bells. I have never heard that they do or say anything good or holy, or that any Christian has ever found in them either help or comfort. Their "fruits" seem to be simply frivolity and godlessness.

What may we gather from this? That they are not good spirits, but *evil spirits, who play the part of persons who are dead*. If they were *really* the souls of the departed: if the spirit of one single departed Christian could thus be called up into the world, we should know all about the future state. As it is, we know nothing but what the Bible and the Church have told us.

There are evil spirits around us now, as there were in Our Lord's time. They have no power over us, but such as we give them. No evil spirit can harm



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us, if we make the Sign of the Cross and say a prayer. They can put bad thoughts into our hearts; but they can neither harm us bodily, nor *force* us to do anything, while we have God on our side: for they have not the power. "Thou shalt not be afraid for any terror by night" (Ps. xci. 5).

But if we court them, and give up our wills to them, that is another matter. Then there is no saying what they may not do.

*The Devil is a Person, not a mere Influence or Idea:* and his evil angels are Persons. They are God's enemies and ours, and are ever watching for the chance to harm us. And such power as we give them, they will doubtless use.

Therefore it is quite reasonable to suppose that they may take the forms of dead persons, and appear to those who summon them, that they may gradually bring them into bondage to the powers of evil.

The Church has always set her face against Spiritualism from the first. A Christian must have nothing to do with it. It is an evil sign of the times, foretold by S. Paul: "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, *giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils*" (1 Tim. iv. 1).

One source of its great spread of late years is plainly the neglect of Prayers for the Dead. A true instinct

in man's nature tells him that it is possible for him to hold communion with another world. The Communion which the Church allows is *Prayer*, in the One Body of Christ. When men give up this lawful Communion, it is quite natural that they should invent one which is unlawful. Take away a good thing, and a bad thing often comes in its place. Just as the neglect of the Friday abstinence has caused the gloomy Puritanical view of Sunday. Men ceased to fast on Friday, the day appointed by the Church for the purpose. But their instinct told them still, that there must be one day of self-denial in every week. Therefore they transferred that idea to Sunday, and turned the Church's joyous weekly Feast into a day of gloom. Destroy a fair flower, and a foul weed springs up in its stead.

Let us not forget, then, to strive with God in Eucharist and prayer, on behalf of the Souls of the Faithful Departed; thanking Him, that by His Death He has destroyed death, and has "knit together His elect in one Communion and Fellowship in the mystical Body of His Son."

## CHAPTER IV.

### THE RESURRECTION—WHAT IS IT ?

“CHRISTIANS will live again after their death.”

Nothing taught by our religion would be of any use to you if it were not so.

But when I say “live,” what do I mean ? For man has two parts, Body and Spirit. After his death, these are far apart from one another ; the Spirit, in the Intermediate World ; the Body, rotting in the ground. Which of these is to live again ?

Some wise heathens, living in the times before Our Lord’s Coming, answered, “The Spirit.” The Greek *Socrates*, for instance, more than four hundred years before Christ, taught that the Soul was immortal, and that it would live in bliss near God for ever, free from the prison of the body.

But none of these “philosophers,” or lovers of wisdom, as they were called, ever dreamed that the *body* would have any part in the life after death. They looked upon the body rather as a hindrance or clog upon the soul, of

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which she would do well to be rid. You remember how the *Stoics* and *Epicureans*, Greek philosophers, laughed at S. Paul at Athens, and called him a “babbler,” because he preached unto them *Jesus and the Resurrection* (Acts xvii. 18, 32). They had no idea of such a thing; it sounded laughable to them. The best hope they had of a future life was that the Soul would spend eternity as a thin, shadowy thing, without a body, and having this only merit, that it could not die. They had no notion that any body would ever share that very doubtful bliss.

Nor need we be much surprised; for we cannot easily fancy such a thing. Have you ever seen a dead person? If so, you know how hard it is to picture that cold, wasted, deserted clay ever taking part in the Soul's eternal life with God.

Yet this is what your Creed requires you to believe—the *Resurrection of the Body*: that at Christ's coming “all men shall rise again *with their bodies*” (Ath. Creed).

This wonderful doctrine has been taught only by two religions—the Jewish and the Christian. There are many other things that we believe that have been believed in (or their like has been believed in) by heathens for ages; such as the Fatherhood of God, the Unity of God, an Incarnation, a suffering Redeemer (Buddha), a Flood. But I do not know of any religion or way of thought that teaches, or has taught, that the

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Body will rise again. It is so utterly unlikely a thing from man's point of view, I suppose, that it would never enter his head, unless it were clearly suggested to him from without. Of all the things which Christians believe it is the most plainly God-given; for no one, in making a religion, would be likely to think of it for a moment, except it were revealed to him from above.

To the Jews of old it was so revealed. But not as it is revealed to us. It was a dim, vague idea that they had of it, until at last it took shape upon the Lips of the Son of God. Yet here are some passages which will show you that they did believe in it.

In Heb. xi. 17, 19, it is said that Abraham offered up Isaac by faith, "accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead."

David, writing of Christ, but *under the figure of himself*, said, "Thou wilt not leave my soul in Hell; neither wilt Thou suffer Thine Holy One to see corruption" (Ps. xvi. 10).

Isaiah (xxvi. 19) says, "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise."

Read the first fourteen verses of the thirty-seventh chapter of Ezekiel, where the Prophet sees the vision of the dry bones rising and standing upon their feet.

Daniel (xii. 2) says, "Many of them that sleep in the dust shall awake."

And Job (xix. 26) speaks the plainest of all:



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“Though after my skin worms destroy this body,  
*yet in my flesh shall I see God.*”

Thus we find the Jews of Our Lord's time believing in it. So much so, that the Sadducees, a sect who did not, were thought peculiar (S. Matt. xxii. 23). And Martha said to Our Lord of her brother Lazarus, “I know that he shall rise again in the Resurrection at the Last Day” (S. John xi. 24).

And when Our Lord came, He clearly taught it. He said (S. John v. 28, 29), “The hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His Voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the Resurrection of Life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.”

And (S. Luke xiv. 14), “Thou shalt be recompensed at the Resurrection of the just.”

And He gave us the secret of it, when He said (S. John xi. 25), “*I am the Resurrection and the Life.*”

And when He Himself rose from the dead, He sowed the seed of the great harvest of the Resurrection, prepared the way for us, and brought life and immortality to light.

Therefore His Church believes that the bodies of the dead in Christ will be raised from their graves by the power and after the likeness of Christ's risen Body.

So that the philosophers of old, you see, had hold of only half the truth. What they had, they had from the

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Holy Ghost, Who "left not Himself without witness" in the nations (Acts xiv. 17). But it was left for the Church to supply the other half.

And now that we know about it, we can see how needful it is. A bodiless spirit might continue in bliss for ever and ever, but while the body, its companion, its other half, lay rotting in the tomb, that could not be Immortality.

Immortality is *Immortal Life*; and Life is twofold. The soul needs a body to clothe it, a body to act upon and through.

Thus the Church knows no doctrine of the "Immortality of the Soul." Her doctrine is the Immortality of the Man.<sup>1</sup> And the Man, in God's regard, is neither the bodiless soul nor the soulless body, but both united. Our Lord showed the Sadducees their error by reminding them how God said, "I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob," after those Patriarchs' death. That meant that He was the God, neither of the bodies of these three, nor of their souls, *alone*; but that He would raise them from the dead, and that in body and soul they should be His once more, and He their God; for He is "not the God of the dead, but of the living" (S. Matt. xxii. 31, 32).

Therefore the Immortality promised by the Christian Faith is the only true Immortality; for it is the only

<sup>1</sup> Canon Mason, *Faith of the Gospel*.

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Immortality which means the Resurrection of the Body.

How and when will the Resurrection take place?

The Church has put forth two great accounts of it. First, in the whole of 1 Cor. xv., the chapter read in the Burial Service. Secondly, in 1 Thess. iv. 13–17. Read both carefully, and compare them. You will see—

(a) That the Resurrection of the dead will depend upon, and will take place through, the Resurrection of Christ (1 Cor. xv. 1–22; 1 Thess. iv. 14).

(b) That there will be due order about it (1 Cor. xv. 23), the “dead in Christ” rising first, and the living Church being caught up to Heaven afterwards (1 Thess. iv. 15–17); for the living will not “prevent” (that is, go before) the dead.

(c) That the sign of the Resurrection will be the sound of a trumpet (1 Cor. xv. 52; 1 Thess. iv. 16).

(d) That the Resurrection-body will spring from this body as the corn springs from the seed, and will be like it, and the result of it, as the wheat is like the grain (1 Cor. xv. 35–41).

(e) That there will be between the Resurrection-body and the present body four points of difference, in that the present body is—

- (1) Sown in corruption, raised in incorruption;
- (2) Sown in dishonour, raised in glory;
- (3) Sown in weakness, raised in power; and

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(4) Sown a natural body, raised a spiritual body (1 Cor. xv. 42-44).

(f) That the Resurrection, being the destruction of the "last enemy," Death, will be followed by the end of all things (1 Cor. xv. 24-28).

(And from other Scriptures it seems as though there will be two Resurrections, of which the first will be a special Resurrection of the Saints, and the second, of all men; for in Rev. xx. 6 we are told, "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first Resurrection;" and in Heb. xi. 35 we read of "a better Resurrection." This former and better Resurrection seems to be called "the Resurrection from the dead," and to this it is the high hope of a Christian to attain; for Our Lord speaks of those "that shall be accounted worthy to obtain the Resurrection from the dead" (S. Luke xx. 35), and S. Paul says that he strives, "if by any means I might attain unto the Resurrection of the dead" (Phil. iii. 11). Now, of course S. Paul knew that, however he lived here, he would attain to *some* Resurrection. It seems, therefore, from his mention of the "Resurrection from the dead" as the object of his great hope, that this is a special reward held in store for faithful members of Christ).

Now, I have said that our Faith holds perhaps no doctrine so hard for most people to believe or understand, as this doctrine that the body will live again.

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But is this difficulty a real or only a seeming one?

Let us see if we cannot find some way of looking at the matter which will make it easier to understand.

You know that God has made a wonderful law, that the natural things around us, which we can see and feel, are types or pictures of supernatural things which we cannot grasp with our senses. The natural world is a guide to the spiritual. Nature is like a ladder, upon which we may mount, God leading us, even unto things unseen, the spiritual things of God. Many of Our Lord's parables tell us of the workings of this law. "For the invisible things of Him are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made" (Rom. i. 20).

Let us use this law in trying to understand the Resurrection better. Let us see if we can find, in Nature, any pictures of the Resurrection of the dead.

i. *It is God's plan, in Nature, to bring life out of death.* We live in the midst of Resurrections.

At evening the day dies, and is buried in darkness; in the morning the sun bursts forth from the tomb of night, and lives again in his strength—a daily Resurrection.

Towards winter, the summer with its plant-life grows aged and dies, and the pall of snow covers the earth;



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all is cold and still in death. But when spring comes, life breaks forth once more upon the earth, plants and flowers rise from their grave, and all lives again—a yearly Resurrection. So in the Last Day we may think of Our Lord as saying to His Bride, the Church, “Rise up, My love, My fair one, and come away. For lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone; the flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come” (Song of Songs ii. 10–12).

The wrinkled seed is dropped into the ground; it lies dead, and corrupts; but from its rottenness there springs the green shoot of corn—S. Paul’s type of the Resurrection from the dead (1 Cor. xv. 36–38).

The ugly grub spins itself a shroud of silk, and dies, or seems to die; but soon it bursts its tomb, and springs forth a glorious butterfly.

Thus all things obey a Law, the law of “life from death,” and it is by this very death that they live again. “That which thou sowest is not quickened, *except it die*” (1 Cor. xv. 36).

And shall we think that MAN, the lord of all these things, for whose sake they live, and die, and live again,—shall we think that Man alone, when he falls into Death’s embrace, shall live no more? Shall this Body, made in God’s image, and itself fed upon countless Resurrections, alone die and cease to be?

“Shall God restore all things to man, and not man to himself?”<sup>1</sup>

ii. *We are always changing.* Every day our bodies are wearing away, and the waste is being supplied by food. In the wear and tear of daily life, particles are for ever flying off from our bodies, and new matter is taking their place. It is said that in a certain number of years our bodies change entirely. If we meet an old friend after long absence, the hand we grasp is not the hand of years ago. The infant *actually changes* into the child, the child into the man. Our bones and muscles wear with work, and the nourishing part of the food we take passes into them, building them up again. We say, “God created us;” but we might say, “God creates us.”

And our bodies are always fighting against disease. Germs or seeds of disease, which we take in when we breathe or eat, are ever floating about in our blood, ready to attack us in a weak place; and we could not live were it not for tiny white particles which God has put into our blood, and which chase these bad germs and rob them of their power. Your body is thus always a battlefield between health and disease. It is ever struggling, ever changing, ever being renewed.

And yet—and here is the great mystery—*it is still*

<sup>1</sup> *Pearson on the Creed*, Art. XI.

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*the same body.* There is the same nature in the mind, the same meaning in the face. In spite of all the changes, "it is I myself." My "Identity," or "sameness," remains, for my memory, my will, my conscience remain. Man flows from form to form like a shadow, and "consumes away like as it were a moth fretting a garment" (Ps. xxxix. 12); but man is still—*himself*.

Now to the point of all this. If these bodies of ours have outlived the working of the laws which ever wear them out and ever shape them newly, is it so hard to believe that they will so outlive the working of *one more change*—the law of Death—the greatest change of all? If man wears his body out like a garment, day by day, now in one place, now in another, and God in His loving mercy as quickly patches it, so to speak, from day to day, mending and restoring all; why should we think that when the body's dress is all done for and shuffled off, God cannot, will not, make all new once more? Shall death, and death only, baffle Him? Nay, "we are dying day by day;" "I die daily" (1 Cor. xv. 31), every change is a death, every night of sleep is a type of death: and which death shall conquer Him Who destroyeth death?

David said (1 Sam. xvii. 37), "The Lord that delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, He will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine." May we not say, "The Lord Who has

kept our bodies safe through danger, disease, decay, and change, will also deliver them from the dreaddest change, the keenest danger,—Death”?

iii. Further. We know that before man was, God made him from the dust of the earth.

This very fact emboldens us to believe that, when man returns to dust, the same God both can and will make him man again.

S. Augustine, the great African Bishop, finely says that “it is a greater wonder for one to be who was not before, than for one who was to come to life again.”<sup>1</sup> And so it is. It is a more wonderful thing to make man out of nothing, than to re-make him out of himself. Even a birth is a more marvellous thing than a resurrection. “A dead man,” says the same great Father again, “is raised from the dead, and men marvel; so many are born daily, and none marvels.”

We see the body passing off, after death, into Nature, and becoming part of other bodies; need we wonder much more at its returning at the last, and becoming part, not of other bodies, but of itself?

Think of the Providence of God. In His knowledge lies every atom that is; His eyes run to and fro through the whole earth; He knows from what dust we are made, and to what dust we shall return. “Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being imperfect,”

<sup>1</sup> *Tractates on S. John's Gospel*, viii. 1.

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says David, "and in Thy book were all my members written" (Ps. cxxxix. 15).

Do you think, then, that there is any atom of your frame that is lost from those Almighty Eyes?

I hope that, by this time, you have found that the Doctrine of the Resurrection is not contrary to nature, but *above* nature; not *unnatural*, but *supernatural*; not magical, but mystical.

Is not this the case with all those wondrous acts of God which we call miracles? You can generally tell God's miracles from other wonders in this way, that the former are worked *upon the lines of Nature*, while the latter are often *contrary to Nature*.

Take almost any Divine miracle in the Bible. You will find that it is just a natural law deepened and strengthened in its working, or a higher spiritual law working on the lines of a natural law.

The Flood was a miracle; but it was a deepening of the natural law of rain.

So were the Plagues of Egypt; but they were worked with natural things, such as blood, frogs, flies, locusts, murrain, hail.

So was Jonah's being swallowed alive by a great fish; but it has been shown to be possible.

And when you come to the miracles of Jesus, you find this more than ever. When He turned water into wine at Cana (S. John ii.) He wrought a mighty



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miracle. Yet He did but do that *in one moment*, which He usually takes a year to do. When God sends the rain and the dew upon the vines, as He does every year, and the moisture, sucked up into their branches, becomes the juice of the ruddy grape, does He not turn water into wine? We wonder not at this, for *we are used to it*. Yet is it really much less marvellous in a year, than in one day?

So with the feeding of five thousand with a few loaves (S. John vi. 1-13). A marvellous thing! Yet every year, by His Blessing, the few handfuls of tiny grain spring up into the great harvest, and multitudes are fed. And we are neither astonished nor thankful, for *we are used to it*. Yet which is the greater wonder of the two?

That is so strange, that the daily miracles we are used to lose their wonder for us; while if God suddenly varies the miracle, we are filled with amazement.

And so it is with the Resurrection of the Dead. We see resurrections, undergo resurrections, daily; and yet, when God tells us that in the Last Day He will turn on somewhat more strongly the current of His same Almighty Power, we are staggered, and can scarcely believe!

Yet will He indeed complete His wise and loving care of us at the last, by raising us, both soul and body, from the dead.

## CHAPTER V.

### THE RESURRECTION-BODY.

Now let us consider a little more deeply this question—

*What will be the nature of the Resurrection-body?*

First, remember this: that though it will be indeed the same body as that worn here, *it will be much changed.*

People sometimes fancy that, when we rise again, God will search the world for the different parts of our bodies, and will join them together again just as they were before.

This is not quite the truth. The risen body will not be so much a re-collection of the present body, as the *result* of it. It will be the outcome or fruit of the present body, and of the use which we have made of it. It will spring from the present body as the plant springs from the seed.

S. Paul puts it grandly in a few words:—

“That which thou sowest is not quickened except it die; and that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of

wheat, or of some other grain; but God giveth it a body as it hath pleased Him, *and to every seed his own body*" (1 Cor. xv. 36-38).

Notice carefully these last seven words. What do they mean?

Let us fancy several seeds cast into the ground. They are *dead*. They decay. According to the law of "Life from Death," of which I spoke in the last Chapter, from out their decay spring up new growths.

But these new growths are different from one another in the same way as those in which the seeds differed. Each seed sends forth its own kind of plant. The wheat-seed has the germ of wheat, and sends forth wheat. The barley-seed has the germ of barley, and sends forth barley. The wheat-grain could never have grown up barley, nor the barley-grain wheat.

So with these bodies of ours. "All flesh is not the same flesh." They will one day die, and be laid in the grave. From that death will spring up new bodies at the Last Day (that is, not different bodies, but the old ones changed). These new bodies will differ from one another—as *the old ones differed*. The character of every new body will be the result of the character of the old. God will give "to every seed his own body."

Each of us contains within himself, at this moment, the germ of his resurrection-body. He will die, will decay; but this germ, never. In the grave it will

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sleep, this seed of the resurrection-self, until the sound of the trumpet call it into life and blend it with the soul.

A wonderful thing happened some years ago. The coffin of an old Egyptian king was opened, and some seeds of corn were found in it. These seeds were placed in the ground, and the life that was born in them thousands of years ago sprang up, and grew into life. All those ages the life had lain hid in those black ugly germs; and at last it broke forth, and God gave "to every seed his own body."

So your body, though hidden in the grave for many thousand years, will at length spring once more into life.

*But it will still be your own life.* What that life will be, depends upon yourself.

Do you suppose that you can mar and spoil your body with sin now and to the end, and that it is going to spring up bright and beautiful at the Last Day? No. "To every seed his own body."

You ask, "What will my Resurrection-body be like?" I answer, "*You are making it now.*"

You cannot see it yet, nor any picture of it. The weaver can only see the back of the tapestry he weaves. But he knows it will be bright and beautiful, if he be patient, and obey his rules. And only if you obey your Master's rules will you lay up for yourself a "glorious body" against that Day.

You must not think that on the Last Day God will dole out bodies to us as rewards or punishments. They will rise, like the wheat and the barley, by Law—the law of their own life. S. Paul says of the corn, that “God giveth it a body,” not “as it shall please Him,” but “as it *hath* pleased Him.” So the new body will be no sudden creation, but will agree with the laws under which God put it when it was born into this world, and with the way in which it has treated them.

Man was created in the Image of God. If his life be Godlike, he will grow more and more like God, and will rise from death with something of God’s glory. But if his life be sinful, he will grow, will rise, like his sin, like the Prince of all sin. We grow into the image of that which we follow.

What is that which makes the difference between man and the lower animals? Not his body. There is no difference in kind between the material of your body and that of the body of a beast. It is *within* that the difference lies. The animals have but animal life. You have that, too, but something more beside—a spark of heavenly fire kindled by God in which God can dwell, which is immortal, through which God deals with you, by which God can take you to dwell with Himself.

Now if like a brute you live for that body of yours which you have in common with the brute, the pure flame of the spirit in you will flicker and fail, and

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your body will rise in the brutish image of the sin to which it has clung.

But if you live and die in God's Image, your God-like spirit will shine out into and through your body, and when at your death she goes to wait elsewhere, she will leave in your body the power of a glorious resurrection.

We see this process taking place every day around us; the spirit within moulding and shaping the body for good or evil. We see sweet bright faces telling the tale of a pure and beauteous soul within. And we see dark wicked faces that make us shudder, which tell another tale. The soul makes or mars the face.

Or again, how wonderfully a brave and fearless spirit will sometimes carry a feeble body through danger or disease. There are no closer mates than the body and the soul. They may catch foul maladies from one another; or they may impart to one another the very life of God.

What, then, shall I do with these twin-sisters, my body and my soul? Shall I let the grosser of them, my body, drag the purer, my soul, down into sin and away from God? Not if I wish to rise again to eternal life.

For it is a matter of "give and take" between body and soul. What the body gives to the soul, that the soul will pay back to the body. If the body gives way to the soul and helps her to live to God, the soul in



return will plant in the body the power of a glorious Resurrection. But if the body, for the sake of its sinful pleasures, draws the soul away from God, then the soul will punish the body by planting in it the germ of a deadly and dreadful resurrection.

This is what S. Paul means when he says, "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting" (Gal. vi. 7, 8).

Now, how can the body do its part in the bargain? What can it give to the soul, that she may give it its true Immortality in return?

To begin with, it can help the soul a great deal *by simply not hindering her*. I mean, by quietly getting its passions under proper mastery, and owning itself the servant of the soul. There are different ways in which this may be done—by Fasting, chiefly ("I keep under my body," said even S. Paul, "and bring it into subjection," 1 Cor. ix. 27). Also by Good Works, and by Almsgiving; but never without earnest Prayer.

But there is a far more precious Gift which the body can be the means of giving to the soul, than any mere subjection.

This Gift is that Heavenly Food, which more than all else builds up the Resurrection-Body of a Christian—the Body and the Blood of Christ, taken and received,

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under the forms of Bread and Wine, by the body of the faithful communicant, and through this bodily means filling the soul with Divine strength and life.

This is the wonderful blessing which Almighty God has willed, by means of the body, to give to the soul. This is the Spiritual Food by which, under the form of natural food, we lay up, here and now, life and power and glory for our spiritual bodies hereafter.

Hear it from the Lips of Christ Himself.

*"Whoso eateth My Flesh, and drinketh My Blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the Last Day"* (S. John vi. 54). "Hath" eternal life; not "shall have" it. He has it here and now.

That is, the Body of Christ is the material of which the Resurrection-Body is made. His Body, being perfectly sinless, and having rendered up to God the full obedience of perfect Sacrifice, is life-giving, and has a rising power; and, if sown like seed within our bodies, will help them to rise glorious, nay, *will rise within them*, at the Last Day.

The Holy Communion sheds abroad the Life of Jesus in both body and soul. Each time we rightly receive it, we return from the Altar stronger, more alive, *in body and soul*. The Priest, in the "Prayer of Humble Access," just before the Consecration Prayer, prays "that our sinful *bodies* may be made clean by His glorious Body, *and* our *souls* washed through His most

Precious Blood." And when he gives you the Body of Christ, he says, "The Body of our Lord Jesus Christ . . . preserve thy *body and soul* unto everlasting Life."

But, alas! if we receive It otherwise, Its effect is otherwise. Bread is good; but it may kill persons in fever, who are unfit to receive it. So the Living Bread is still the Living Bread, whoever receives It—but to the unworthy It brings their condemnation (1 Cor. xi. 29). Each time we unworthily receive Him at the Altar, we return weaker, less alive, *in Body and Soul*.

Remember S. Paul's words to the Corinthians (1 Cor. xi. 30), "*For this cause* many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep" (that is, are dead). For what cause? Unworthy reception of the Blessed Sacrament, which not only hurts the soul, but falls back in ruin upon the body, and so hinders our Resurrection Hope.

But just as the natural body is built up in its sinews and muscles by continual supplies of natural food, so our Spiritual Body is built up by Spiritual Food. We eat earthly bread, and it becomes flesh and bones; we receive Heavenly Bread, and It becomes the principle of that Body which shall inherit eternal life. Thus Christ, the Power of God and the Wisdom of God, brings it to pass that our bodies store up within themselves the power of the life to come, by taking into themselves that earthly food which, filling our souls

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with Heavenly Food, gives back again to our bodies that which in them shall rise from the dead.

This sounds good and pious ; but *do you feel it ?* Do you see what it means for your body ? Does it show you how immensely important your body is ?

People have the idea that Our Lord came to teach us to despise our bodies—that, according to Christianity, the soul is the only part of us worth a moment's care.

This wrong view is sometimes actually made an excuse for wickedness. I remember, while visiting in a country place, coming across a woman who was living in sin. When I talked to her, and tried to show her how wrongly she was acting, she answered, "*What does it matter what I do with my vile body, so long as my immortal soul is saved ?*"

I do not remember ever to have heard a remark which told a sadder tale of dreadful ignorance of the very A B C of the Christian Faith. "*My vile body ;*" "*my immortal soul.*"

Then why don't you commit suicide at once ? If your soul is the only part of you with a future before it, and the prison of your "vile body" is keeping it from that future, hadn't you better burst the prison as soon as possible, and set your "immortal soul" free ? I don't see that there is anything to keep you back from this. It would be a righteous act, in the circumstances.

But I think you know by this time that the body is no more "vile" than the soul, nor the soul more "immortal" than the body.

S. Paul certainly uses the word "vile" of the body. He says that Christ "shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious Body" (Phil. iii. 21). But the word "vile," which has changed its sense, gives a wrong idea of S. Paul's meaning here. He did not mean that our bodies, in themselves as bodies, were low things. S. Paul was too much of a Churchman, too much of a man, to say such a thing. He, or his disciple, says of man in the Epistle to the Hebrews, quoting from Ps. viii. 5, "Thou madest him a little lower than the Angels; Thou crownedst him with glory and honour" (ii. 7).

No; what S. Paul wrote, in the Greewas, 'k, '*the body of our humiliation.*' So we find it translated in the Revised Version. And that is what it is. Not *in itself*—for it is the most beautiful of God's works—but in our treatment of it. You see we have nearly spoilt it, by sin. But God found a way on the Cross by which He will transform it from humiliation to glory.

The case of your watch may have been so battered that part of it bulges inwards and hinders the works, so that they go badly. But you would not, on this account, say, "A watch-case is a bad thing; I will have none at all." If you threw away the case, the works

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might go for a time ; but they would soon get choked with dust, and stop altogether. No, you would take the injured watch to the watchmaker, who would take the works out of the case, mend both works and case, and then put them together again, to go rightly once more.

I think the case and works are types of your body and soul. Your body, made beautiful in the beginning, has been hurt by sin—and, through your body, your soul. But your body is not to be cast aside on this account. It has been the cause and partner of the soul's injury ; it must therefore be the cause and partner of her restoration. She cannot enter eternal life without it. God therefore tries and tests them both together in this life, and will take them apart, and mend each separately in death—will cleanse and train the soul in Paradise, and will new-make the body from the grave. On the Last Day He will join them together, and will take them, perfect, to Himself.

Be careful how you speak about your body ; be careful how you treat it. Respect it, honour it, not by pampering self-indulgence, but by good works, by watchfulness against sin. Don't imagine that you are winning merit with Almighty God by choking up your senses, killing your feelings, learning to hate beauty and to love ugly things. By doing this you may become a religious machine, but you will not win the love of God or man, nor will you save or sanctify your



whole self. God never gave you your delicate senses, your artistic feelings, to kill and stifle, any more than He gave you them to glut and pamper. He gave you them to *Consecrate*, to *Sanctify*. He meant you to press all your parts, all your faculties, into His service. He means "that *your whole spirit and soul and body* be preserved blameless unto the coming of Our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Thess. v. 23).

"What! know ye not that your body is the Temple of the Holy Ghost Which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?" (1 Cor. vi. 19). As the Glory of God dwelt in the Holy of Holies, in the Temple of old, so dwells the Spirit of God in the Temple of your body. Every time you sin in your body you hurt its hope of rising. "If any man defile the Temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the Temple of God is holy, which Temple ye are" (1 Cor. iii. 17).

So, on the whole, to your question, "What will be the nature of my Resurrection Body?" I can only answer by another question, "What are you doing with your natural body?"

But now let us suppose that you are doing all you can to help that work of grace by which God is preparing your body for the next life. What, then, will your risen body be like?

Let S. John answer the question. "Beloved, now are

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we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we *know* that, when He shall appear, *we shall be like Him*; for we shall see Him as He is" (1 S. John iii. 2).

So that if we wish for information as to our risen bodies, we must look to Christ's, their spring and pattern.

Bear in mind, however, first, that Christ is God. We shall not be all that He is. The body of the creature that has sinned will never be *as* fair, *as* glorious, as the Body of the sinless Creator. His Body is perfect, and ours will also be perfect. But remember what "perfect" means. One thing cannot be more, or less, perfect than another. A jeweller may make a perfect gold ring, and a perfect silver ring; but the one, though it be more valuable, will not be more perfect than the other. "Perfect" means "perfect in itself." It is a Bible word, and means that a thing has nothing wrong with it, is quite good of its kind, has reached fully the ends for which it was made. A worm, for instance, if whole, is perfect; but a glorious butterfly with a broken wing is not. "Perfect" means literally "made through and through."

Thus one perfect thing cannot be more perfect than another perfect thing. But it can be more beautiful, more glorious, more like God.

So our Lord's Body is not *more perfect* than ours

will be. But It is unspeakably more glorious. It is different, not in kind, but infinitely in degree. Remember that with reverence, and we can go on to compare our bodies with His Blessed Body, without fear of presumption.

The new conditions under which Our Blessed Lord rose from the dead are four. And I am going to give you their hard names, and tell you what they mean.

They are *Incorruptibility*, *Brightness*, *Agility*, and *Subtilty*.

S. Paul, in 1 Cor. xv. 42-44, is comparing the Resurrection of a Christian's Body with the growth of a plant from a seed. And he says four things about it—

(i.) That "it is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption:" that is, *Incorruptibility*. This means that the bodies of the Saints will be able to suffer neither pain nor corruption. Such was the Risen Body of Our Lord. It bore the marks of His Five Wounds, for it was His Will to show these to His Father. But no pain or corruption will ever pass upon It any more.

(ii.) That "it is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory:" that is, *Brightness*. This means that the bodies of the Saints will rise in splendour which will be in the measure of each one's merits. Such was the Risen Body of Our Lord. His Merits are perfect; and therefore His Risen Body is bright beyond our highest fancy.

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(iii.) That "it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power." That is called *Agility*. This means that the bodies of the Saints will rise in the perfect enjoyment of powers which here are weak or wanting; and that, therefore, they will be able to pass from one place to another in a moment.

Such was the Risen Body of Our Lord. Before His Death He would *walk* from place to place in the ordinary way. For instance, if He wanted to go from Judæa into Galilee, He would not waft Himself there by a miracle, but "must needs" walk as would any other man, even though His path lay through a Samaria which was full of men who hated Him (S. John iv. 3, 4).

But after His Resurrection His Body was *agile*, that is, It could, and did, suddenly vanish from one place and appear in another, with the quickness of light or thought; as when, after having "appeared" to the two disciples going to Emmaus, He "vanished out of their sight" (S. Mark xvi. 12; S. Luke xxiv. 31).

(iv.) That "it is sown a natural body; it is raised a Spiritual Body." That is called *Subtilty*. This means that the bodies of the Saints, being spiritual, will be able to *pass through* all things as they will. Such was the Risen Body of Our Lord. It came out of a sealed tomb, and passed through doors which were closed.

It is not difficult to suppose that the Resurrection-body may have all these faculties, and yet be *matter*. There are very fine forms of matter already known to us, such as the electric fluid. Some wise men say that this is rather a *condition* of matter, than matter actually. In any case, it can pass through solid substances, and yet is a purely material thing. How do we know that our spirits will not be clothed with a body made of something equally fine, as yet unknown to us?

All these wonderful powers belonged, perfectly, to Our Redeemer's Body, when He rose again. And by the might of that blessed Resurrection they will belong, at least in some measure, to His Members, when He shall raise them up at the Last Day. For His Glorious Nature, which has been building them up in this life, will then rise within them to Life Eternal.

They will not suffer, they will be bright, they will go from place to place in a moment, they will pass through all things. They will be bodies of "flesh and bones," like His. Perhaps they will have, like His, the power of appearing "in another form" (S. Mark xvi. 12).

"Will they be recognisable? Shall we know one another?"

I cannot see how it is possible to doubt it. It seems likely, we must own, that our new bodies will *differ*

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*more* from our present, than did His from what It was before He died; for our bodies will corrupt between Death and Resurrection, which His did not.

But as each of us will have "his own body," surely we shall know our friends in Christ just as we know them here, when we meet them, much changed, after a long absence. If you suppose otherwise, it seems to me that you overthrow the whole doctrine of the Resurrection. If you think of God as dealing out similar bodies to all the saints just as regulation uniforms are doled out to soldiers, or bodies so totally different from their former selves as to be unrecognisable, then surely it would be better to cut the words, "To every seed his own body," out of the Bible altogether.

Besides, what is to become of human affection? Is that to be cast aside in eternal life? Would God be so cruel? The whole Bible teems with human love, the tender care of God's creatures for one another. Is all this to be abolished? We belong to the "Communion" or "fellowship" of saints; we pray for one another, here and after death; we are members one of another; all that draws us to Christ draws us to each other: how hopeless it all seems, if the Resurrection-glory means good-bye to loved ones in the land where Christ shall wipe away all tears from our eyes.

The Risen Lord was known to His friends. Surely



in the Resurrection, as here, "all flesh is not the same flesh" (1 Cor. xv. 39). Surely in that land we shall know, as God, so one another, "even as also we are known" (see 1 Cor. xiii. 12).

As to whether there will be any trace of former wounds or bodily defects in that body, that is a question which is more difficult to answer. Neither the Bible nor the Church has spoken plainly in the matter. It is certain that the risen body will not be *marred* or *spoilt* by wounds or scars; but it seems reasonable to think that they may leave some *trace* behind. Our Lord's Five Wounds, after He rose, could be plainly seen and handled, and will ever remain in His Body as tokens of His victory over sin; but the Church believes that, so far from *marring* that Body, they have a special brightness shining from them. Perhaps Isaiah meant this, when he spoke of Our Lord as coming "with dyed garments from Bozrah" (lxiii. 1). And S. Augustine says that this will be so with the wounds of the Martyrs, for it is through their sufferings that their glory has been attained.

S. Thomas Aquinas, a great Doctor of the Church, says that men will rise again in the size and form which they would have had if they had died at the age at which Christ arose, about the age of thirty-three; for that, he adds, is the age at which man is at his ripest and best. This view may seem more

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reasonable to some than to others. It is of course not "of faith" in any way.

The Resurrection-body, being perfect, will perfectly obey the spirit, and will never rebel against it. And both soul and body will agree perfectly with the Will of God. For on earth, man was "in the flesh;" in the Intermediate State, he was "in the spirit;" but in the Resurrection the two will be perfectly united, a spirit purely taught by God, with a body purely able to obey it.

It is reasonable to believe that the Saints will be able to exchange their thoughts without speaking, when they please. For the body will not stand in the way, as it does here, when soul and soul would come face to face. Yet even here we seem sometimes to have a hint or foretaste of this; as when it has so often happened that friends at a distance have thought the same thoughts at the same time, or one in conversing with his friend has said the very thing his friend was just about to say.

"Will Sex be preserved in the Resurrection?"

We do not know of anything to the contrary. Sex is a part of human nature. It was so with man from the beginning. All that Our Lord has said in the matter is that "in the Resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are as the Angels in Heaven" (S. Matt. xxii. 30).

## CHAPTER VI.

### THE END OF THE WORLD.

THERE is in us all a something called Conscience, which tells us when we do right, and when we do wrong.

When we do right, we are for the most part happy ; when we do wrong, we are uneasy, and afraid with a vague fear which we can hardly explain.

This shows that God has put something into our hearts to tell us that He will reward us if we do right, and punish us if we do wrong.

Yet as we grow older and get to know the world better, we notice that God does not seem to be doing this. People do not seem to be treated, in this world, as they deserve. Wicked and unprincipled people often prosper and are lucky. Good people, who try to do right, are often hapless, poor, and despised.

This makes it clear that, if we are to get our deserts, it will not be in this world. If we are to be rewarded according to our deeds, it must be, not here, but hereafter.

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We are like accused criminals, awaiting our trial. If in that trial we are cleared, we shall be rewarded. If we are condemned, we shall be punished.

All this we can see clearly from that Something inside us which God has put into all men, be they savage or civilised, Christian or heathen, and which is like a looking-glass, showing us the Eternal Will of God.

I should think every one really knows this, though he may act as if he did not. You remember how S. Paul once came before Felix, a heathen governor. We read (Acts xxiv. 25) that as S. Paul "reasoned of . . . judgment to come, *Felix trembled.*"

So we do not need either the Bible or the Church to teach us that—however we may live here—there will one day come a JUDGMENT, a DAY OF RECKONING, in which the good will be separated from the bad, and each will receive those just measures which he may have missed in this life.

And this is the teaching of Christianity. The Bible is full of warnings of "the Judgment." I will only give two.

In Heb. ix. 27 we are told that "it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the Judgment." And S. Jude (ver. 6) speaks of "the Judgment of the Great Day."

Now, God made the laws by which we are to be judged.

Therefore THE JUDGE MUST BE GOD.

So says the Bible. Abraham said to Almighty God (Gen. xviii. 25), "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" Hannah said (1 Sam. ii. 10), "The Lord shall judge the ends of the earth." David says (Ps. xcvi. 13), "He cometh to judge the earth." God Himself says (Isa. li. 5), "Mine Arms shall judge the people." And S. Paul says (Rom. ii. 16), "God shall judge the secrets of men."

But the Judge must have "suffered, being tempted." He must know all the trials and difficulties which have stood in the way of those whom He is to judge. He must have Himself overcome them, and shown the way of victory to those who are to be judged.

Therefore THE JUDGE MUST ALSO BE MAN.

And who is both God and Man?

Jesus Christ. He is the Judge. He is the God Who made us, and the Man Who gave Himself for us. He is indeed fit to judge us, for He knows us through and through. For He first, as God, formed our wills; and then, as Man, *put Himself in our position*, fought our battle out, and gained the day. We may be sure of perfect Justice from the Son of God; we may be sure of perfect Mercy from the Son of Man.

It is, then, Our Lord Jesus Christ to Whom God the Father has given the office of judging the world at the Last Day. Jesus Christ Himself said (S. John v. 22

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and 27), "The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son;" and, "The Father . . . hath given Him authority to execute judgment, because He is the Son of Man." And S. Paul (2 Tim. iv. 1) says, "The Lord Jesus Christ . . . shall judge the quick and the dead."

This is the great doctrine of the Judgment, or Second Coming of Christ.

It is clear from the Bible that Christ was to come a second time. Two Comings are spoken of—a lowly coming, and a glorious Coming.

For instance, Zechariah (ix. 9) says, "Behold, thy King cometh unto thee . . . lowly, and riding upon an ass." This of course refers to our Lord's First Coming, which is past and over.

But S. Jude (ver. 14) says that Enoch prophesied of Our Lord as coming "with ten thousands of His Saints." This must mean another and more glorious Coming hereafter.

Of this the Angels spoke at the Ascension (Acts i. 11): "This same Jesus . . . shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into Heaven"—that is, in a glorious manner.

And so Our Lord Himself said (S. Matt. xxvi. 64), "Hereafter ye shall see the Son of Man . . . coming in the clouds of Heaven."

So said S. Paul (1 Thess. iv. 16), "The Lord Himself



shall descend from Heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God."

The Second Coming, then, which is so clear from Holy Scripture, will be *for the purpose of judging the world*.

Much that Our Blessed Lord said on earth pointed to the Day of Judgment. He speaks of Himself (S. Matt. xiii. 30, 39) as a Husbandman separating wheat from tares; (vv. 47, 48) as a Fisherman gathering the good fish, and throwing away the bad; (xxv. 32) as a Shepherd dividing sheep from goats.

But if you want the fullest account of that Great Day, read the twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth chapters of S. Matthew.

You will see there that the Disciples had come privately to Our Lord as He sat upon the Mount of Olives, and said to Him, "Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of Thy Coming, and of the end of the world?"

And our Lord went on to tell them—

(1) That the end was not yet, for there must first come many false Christs (xxiv. 4, 5, 23-28).

(2) That there must first be a time of war, famine, plague, and sin, and trouble for the Church (vv. 6-21).

(3) That the end should be sudden and short (ver. 22).

(4) That there should be disturbances in sun, moon,

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and stars; and that the "Sign of the Son of Man" (which we believe to be the Sign of the Cross) should appear in Heaven (vv. 29, 30).

(5) That He Himself should come in the clouds of Heaven with power and great glory, gathering in the Elect with His Angels (vv. 30, 31).

(6) That when they saw these signs they were to take notice that the end was at hand (vv. 32, 33).

(7) That they were to watch, for the time was unknown (ver. 36) and sudden (vv. 37-44).

(8) That the wise servant, who should be found keeping his Lord's house, should be rewarded; while the wicked servant, who thought himself safe in his Lord's delay, should be cast out (vv. 45-51).

(9) That they were to put out their Master's gifts at the best interest (xxv. 14-30).

(10) That He would sit on His Judgment-seat and separate the good from the bad, rewarding the one, and punishing the other (vv. 31-33, 46).

(11) That whatsoever good they did in the meantime, He would consider done to Himself (vv. 35, 36).

(12) That in that Day the good should think that they had done evil, and the wicked that they had done good (vv. 35-46).

Now, these two chapters refer, as I have said, to the Last Day. But they also refer partly to something else.

Before Our Lord began His discourse, His Disciples had stopped Him and asked Him to look at the Temple Buildings, which were very stately and beautiful.

Now, Our Lord knew that the time was not far off when this Temple, with all Jerusalem, should be destroyed.

And this led Him to begin foretelling the destruction of Jerusalem; from which He went on to foretell the end of the world.

Jerusalem was destroyed by Titus, under the Roman Emperor Vespasian, thirty-seven years afterwards, seventy years after the birth of Christ, with terrible bloodshed.

This was a first and shadowy fulfilment of these prophecies of Our Lord. Those contained in the first twenty-two verses of the twenty-fourth chapter of S. Matthew really came true.

Let us glance at them.

Our Lord said (S. Matt. xxiv. 2) that there should not be left of the Temple "one stone upon another." The Temple was entirely burnt down, though Titus did his best to save it.

He said (ver. 5), "Many shall come in My Name, and say, I am Christ." S. John says (1 S. John ii. 18), "Even now there are many antichrists" (that is, persons who come instead of Christ), "whereby we know that it is the last time."

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He spoke of war, famines, earthquakes, tribulation, desolation: all these came to pass. The Temple courts swam with blood. More than a million Jews perished in the siege. Many thousands were starved to death. Children were snatched from their mothers, and butchered. People were crucified in full view of their friends. The crowds in the city gave rise to a plague. The stores were destroyed by fire, which caused a famine.

Our Lord said (ver. 16), "Let them which be in Judæa flee to the mountains." This many Jews actually did, at the time of the siege.

But after the twenty-second verse, Our Lord seems to be speaking more especially of the end of the world. The fullest account of this is the Book of Revelation, which S. John wrote from a vision which he saw in his banishment in the Island of Patmos. We read that before the end comes, many terrible things will happen, such as have never happened before.

These things will happen:

(1) *Among men.* There will be great wars between the nations of the earth. The servants of Christ will be persecuted, many will be slain, and many will fall away from the Faith. There will be little true Christianity left in the world. Men's passions will run fearful riot. Few will believe Christ to be near.

A wicked man will arise called "Antichrist," which means "instead of Christ." He will draw crowds of worshippers after him, and will try to put himself above God. S. Paul (2 Thess. ii. 3) particularly warns us not to expect the day of Christ until that man be revealed. He will do miracles by the power of Satan (2 Thess. ii. 9). He will put a mark in the right hands and foreheads of his followers (Rev. xiii. 16).

Two Witnesses will be sent by God to take His part in the world. The Church has thought that they will be those two men who did not die, ENOCH (Gen. v. 24) and ELIJAH (2 Kings ii. 11).

Of Elijah Malachi wrote (iv. 5), "I will send you Elijah the Prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful Day of the Lord."

These two witnesses will preach and do miracles. Enoch, who lived before the giving of the Law, will convert the heathen; as we read in Ecclus. xlv. 16, "Enoch was translated" (that is, taken to Heaven), "being an example of repentance to all generations." Elias the Israelite, of whom it is written (Ecclus. xlviii. 10) that he will "restore the tribes of Jacob," will convert the Jews. So holy men have believed.

When their work is done, they will be slain by the Antichrist (Rev. xi. 7).

(2) *In Nature.* The heavenly bodies, the earth, the sea, will be disturbed. There will be great plagues,

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great famines. Men will be in deadly fear of what is coming. Summer and winter will change places.

And, at the last, "the earth and the works that are therein shall be burned up" (2 S. Pet. iii. 10).

Such are the chief things which Holy Scripture tells us will happen at the end of the world.

When will this be?

No one knows.

People have often tried to guess. There are sects and men in the world now who pretend to be able to tell us the exact dates.

But Our Lord says (S. Mark xiii. 32), "Of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the Angels which are in Heaven, neither the Son, but the Father."

"*Neither the Son!*" Our Lord Himself did not know the Day of His Coming!

Of course this means that AS MAN He did not know it.

As God He knew all. But he had "emptied Himself of His Glory," and had put the knowledge away from His Human Nature.

Our Lord is said (Luke ii. 52) to have "*increased in wisdom.*" This shows that *His Human Nature* had not always perfect knowledge.

How wonderful, that the All-wise God could put knowledge out of Himself!



Our Blessed Lord, then, said that neither man, nor the Angels, nor Himself, knew the Day upon which He should come to judge the world.

And when the Disciples once asked Him much the same question, He answered them almost sternly (Acts i. 7), "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in His own power."

It cannot, then, surely be right to try and find out what Our Lord so plainly declared that even His Apostles could not know—much less we ourselves.

Yet many have spent the best part of their lives in trying to reckon the Last Times from the numbers which are found in the Books of Daniel and the Revelation. No doubt God will vouchsafe more light upon these matters when He thinks it is required.

But Our Lord has not told us to reckon the day of His Coming. He has told us to BE READY FOR IT WHEN IT SHALL COME.

The Master has told His servants that He will come as a "thief in the night" (2 S. Pet. iii. 10). Which is the more becoming in those servants, to try to cipher out the time, that they may continue as long as possible in unreadiness and worldly pleasure; or to have a care that each hour shall find them with loins girt and lamps burning, ever ready for the Master Who shall come in such an hour as they think not?

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Surely the latter. Our Lord did not say, "Calculate." He said, "Watch" (S. Mark xiii. 37).

Blessed is that servant whom He shall find watching.

Yet, though we cannot know the hour, we must never allow ourselves to think it is far off.

Whenever Our Lord spoke of His Coming, He added the command to "watch." He no doubt kept the Day secret, that all men might live as in readiness for it.

The Apostles looked for it in their time. S. Paul (Phil. iv. 5) says, "The Lord is at hand." S. John (1 S. John ii. 18) says, "Little children, it is the last time." And that was nearly two thousand years ago.

It must be much nearer now.

Many things happen around us nowadays, which may make us think seriously that our "salvation is nearer than when we believed." More shocking things of all kinds happen now than ever before in the history of the world. Terrible weapons of war are made, with which all nations arm themselves by sea and land. Unbelief and sin abound on all sides. Many people are getting faithless, and scorning the Church of God; and yet she spreads more than ever into all lands.

I do not say it *follows* from these things that the end is near. I put this before you simply to prevent you from thinking that it is far off, and so becoming unwatchful and careless.

It is one thing to take warning by the signs of the

times, while it is quite another thing to try to guess the date of the Coming of Our Lord.

Remember what S. Peter (2 S. Pet. iii. 3, 4) says of the scoffers who shall come, saying, "Where is the promise of His coming? for all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation."

But I would guard you against falling into one mistake.

You will hear ignorant people say, "*Antichrist is the Pope of Rome.*"

What Pope of Rome? There have been more than 250 Popes of Rome.

Therefore the remark is meaningless.

But even supposing it to have a meaning, that meaning is disrespectful, uncharitable, and wrong.

We of the Church of England are not Roman Catholics. We are English Catholics, and we know that some things believed by Roman Catholics are new and unwarrantable.

But we shall never do any good, either to Roman Catholics or to ourselves, by throwing texts of Scripture at the Pope which do not fit him at all.

Antichrist, according to Scripture, will set himself up openly against God as God's enemy, and will work miracles by the power of Satan, drawing after him all wicked men; and will cause himself to be worshipped as God.

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This cannot be truly said of any Pope.

Therefore it should not be said.

We must remember that the Church of Rome, though we differ from her in some part of her teaching, is the greater part of the Catholic Church of Christ. She teaches the Gospel, offers the one great Sacrifice of the Eucharist, and administers the Sacraments, some of which she has preserved in a completer form than we ourselves. She has brought forth many holy Saints; and many of her Bishops have been good and holy men. We have no right to suppose that her children are not perfectly sincere in all they believe.

For these reasons we should respect her. We may differ from her in some matters, but it is not part of our religion to insult and revile her. It is certainly not part of the teaching of our Prayer-book.

## CHAPTER VII.

### THE JUDGMENT.

IN the Last Day, then, Our Lord will come TO JUDGE THE QUICK (that is, the living) AND THE DEAD.

Our Lord will appear in the air upon clouds of glory, with the Angels of Heaven.

The dead will be summoned to life by the voice of an Archangel, and the sound of a trumpet (1 Thess. iv. 16).

And they, together with the living, will stand before the Judgment Seat of the Son of Man.

The Judgment will be a very different thing from any judgment of man's. No doubt there will be much that will surprise us. Many that have been crying "Lord, Lord," will be condemned; while others, who have been grieved and frightened at the thought of their own unworthiness, will hear the Judge say, "Come, ye blessed children of My Father."

This will be because God's Judgment is different from man's.

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God sees things as they really are. Man often sees them as he wants to see them.

God looks straight through into people's hearts, and sees their most secret motives and thoughts. Man judges by appearances, and is deceived by outward show.

God knows all the *circumstances* of every work, what temptations led to it, what excuses it, how the doer of it was placed when he did it. Man knows none of these things.

The balance of God's judgment will be perfectly true, for God has no favourites, but will judge every man "according to his deeds." Man, as a rule, judges his friend kindly, while he is hard on his enemy: and so the scales of his justice are turned.

God *made* man; therefore God only *knows* man. Man neither knows himself nor his fellow-man aright. Even dear friends cannot really know each other. For we all have two selves, the Self we show to the world, and the Self as it really is.

But we cannot deceive God, Who sees us and knows us as we really are.

It follows from all this that God's Judgment will be PERFECTLY JUST. All will receive the sentence they deserve.

This is good news to good people. But to bad people it is very bad news.



If you were charged with a crime of which you were innocent, you would hope that the judge would be just, for in that case you would be cleared.

But if you were guilty, you would secretly wish to be brought before an unjust judge, that your crime might be passed over, or that some other might suffer instead of you.

Many people do not really believe God to be just. They say so with their lips. But in their hearts they secretly hope His Mercy will outweigh His Justice at the last. They say, "Tush, God shall not regard it."

Why? Perhaps because they are living in sin. They would like many passages in their lives to be overlooked, or forgotten.

Yet God will not overlook anything. In Rev. xx. 12, S. John tells us that in his Vision "the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works."

In those "books" are written every man's thoughts, words, and deeds. And especially the thoughts, words, and deeds of Christians. They have had a greater measure of grace than others, and so will be judged by a higher standard.

In that Day all our most cherished secrets will be brought to light. "There is nothing hid that shall not be revealed."

God says (Rev. ii. 23), "I am He that searcheth the

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hearts." And (S. Matt. xii. 36), "Every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the Day of Judgment."

And not only will God take into account all that we have done, but all that we *might have done*. All our *chances* will come into the Judgment. All we have plotted and planned and dreamed will then appear plain and open before God and man. Nothing will be forgotten, either by God or by ourselves.

Nothing that we do is ever really forgotten by us.

All things leave their trace in our brains. I know a person who was once nearly drowned, but was saved at the last moment. That person said to me, "I thought my end was come. Suddenly, as I began to sink, there passed before my mind's eye a vision of all that I had ever done in my life. My childhood, my youth, my whole life, *with many things I thought I had forgotten*, rose up before me, and I cried to God for mercy."

I have heard the same thing of many people who believed themselves at the point of death.

So in that Day, when we stand before Christ, we shall remember, and see in their true light, all the deeds of our life. And we shall know that God's Judgment is just.

Thus of course "God's Justice" has a terrible sound in the ears of sinful men.

But to the righteous, what a blessed message it is! They know that they will be cleared. They know that at that Day they will not be judged by this man or by that woman, who condemned them so harshly on earth, but by the just and loving Jesus, Who knows them, feels for them, died for them.

Have they not often cried out, "So-and-so does not understand me; but God does"?

God will do them that justice, which they have missed in this world.

But you may be wondering, "How will God judge the heathen, who have never heard the name of Christ? By what law will they be judged?"

I began the last chapter by speaking of a Law called Conscience, which every man has in his own heart.

This is the Law by which the heathen will be judged. They will be judged by their faithfulness to that natural law which God has given to all men. S. Paul tells us (Rom. ii. 14, 15) "the Gentiles . . . are a law unto themselves: which show the works of the law written in their hearts."

Read carefully S. Matt. xxv. 34 to end, and you will see the kind of works which Our Lord will reward at His Coming.

These are all works of mercy, such as might be done by an unbeliever or a heathen, out of the natural goodness of his heart.

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Many who have never had a chance of knowing Christ on earth, have yet done such works as these ; for man's nature, though spoilt, is not utterly ruined.

These works, then, Our Lord will take as done to Himself, at the Last Day ; and though, of course, He will not give the mere doers of them so great a reward as He will give to pious Christians, yet He will not let them be lost with the wicked.

For they will have been true to the little light God gave them at the beginning. More than this, God will not expect.

ALL WILL BE JUDGED ACCORDING TO THE LIGHT GIVEN THEM. The ancient Jews will be judged by the Jewish Law. Christians will be judged by Christianity.

The more light a person has had given to him in this world, the more strictly will God judge him. The more you have been taught about God, the more He will expect of you.

Do you belong to the Church ? God will judge you very strictly.

Do you live near a Church where there is a daily Eucharist, and full Gospel teaching ? Does your Parish Priest come often to see you, and try to get you to God through His Sacraments ? Then yours is a very great responsibility.

You remember the lord in the parable (S. Matt. xxv.

14-30) who gave five talents to one servant, and only two to another ; how he expected two talents from the latter, *but five from the former*, because he had received five at the outset ?

So from you, when He comes, Jesus Christ will look to "receive His own with usury."

The servant who knows his lord's will, and does not do it, Our Lord says, "shall be beaten with many stripes : while he that knows it not, and does nothing worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes" (S. Luke xii. 47, 48).

Now, dear reader, if you have not been very carefully taught, you may say this :—

"I thought S. Paul said we were saved 'through faith,' and that 'by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.' If, then, I have perfect faith, and feel in my heart that I am saved, why should I be judged?"

Why indeed! Judgment would be quite useless in the case of such an one.

But have you "perfect faith"?

Think what "perfect faith" would mean. It would mean that you lived a perfect life. It would mean *that you never did anything wrong*.

The Bible says that good works are to faith as the fruit is to the tree. Our Lord says (S. Matt. vii. 18), "A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit;" that is, a "perfect faith" must bring forth perfect works.

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Therefore, if you have a "perfect faith," you must be leading a perfect life.

Now, you know that no one is leading a perfect life. Do not say, then, "I have perfect faith."

It is very dangerous to take one text out of the Bible and hang a chain of ideas upon it without knowing or caring what the rest of Holy Scripture says upon the subject. This is the way in which people leave the Religion of Jesus Christ and make up a religion for themselves, full of half truths, which quickly ripen into whole falsehoods.

When an earnest student of Scripture manufactures a new religion, the result is sad enough. But when a person who has only read snatches of the Holy Book tries to invent one, he lands himself in a terrible quagmire.

S. Paul does indeed say that "by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified" (Gal. ii. 16).

But he also says (Rom. ii. 6) that God "will render to every man according to his deeds."

And S. James says (ii. 24), "By works a man is justified, and not by faith only."

What, then, does S. Paul mean?

He means what he says. He means that we shall not be justified by "the works of the Law"—the old Jewish Law, which cannot make us good. Nor by any works *alone*, which without faith are dead: but *by Faith and Works*, which go together.



You must not separate Faith from good Works in your mind. There is no such thing as Faith without good works. S. James says (ii. 20), " Faith without works is dead."

If you love a person very dearly, you will do all you can to please him. Your love will be known by your loving actions.

So, if you have true faith in God, you will do the things He bids you. Your Faith will be known by your good deeds.

We do not merely put faith in a dead fact of the past. We believe in " Him that liveth and was dead " (Rev. i. 18); and our faith in that Living Christ, if it be Faith at all, must and will bring forth the fruit of Living Works, done by the help of His Living Grace, for His sake.

Thus, when a person says, " I have faith in God," and does not the Will of God, it is not easy to believe in that person's Faith.

And, what is more, GOD WILL NOT BELIEVE IN IT. God will at the Last Day judge our Faith by our good works, or by our lack of good works. " Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire " (S. Matt. vii. 19).

You must not think, then, that any one, however great his faith may be, will escape the Judgment.

Even Apostles will not ! S. Paul says (2 Cor. v. 10),

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“ *We* must all appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body.”

But now to the second part of your question.

You say, “If I feel in my heart that I am saved.”

I am very glad you feel that.

But dare you *trust* to such a feeling? Can you safely trust any of your feelings? The Pharisee in the Temple trusted his feelings (S. Luke xviii. 11, 12).

How can you be sure that your feeling is not simply self-conceit dressed up to seem like Faith? While you are having these comfortable feelings about God, He may, for all you know, be very angry with you for some sin of which you are not convinced.

I do not mean that the true Christian may not feel a beautiful inward peace. I only warn you against the dangerous idea that you can give up all work for God and all holy fear of the judgment because you have certain feelings in your human heart.

S. Paul may have had these feelings too. But he did not trust to them. He said (Phil. iii. 13, 14), “I count not myself to have apprehended” (that is, “I am not *sure* that I am saved yet”) “but . . . I press toward the mark for the prize.” And in another place (1 Cor. ix. 27) he says, “I keep under my body . . . lest . . . I myself should be a castaway.”

Justification by Faith is half a truth. But Justification by Feelings is no truth at all.

What is Justification ?

Is it a calling souls righteous, when they are not so ?

No. It is the act of God which marks the soul as righteous, after it has been made righteous by the grace of God.

And if you wish to be justified at the Day of Judgment, you must, whatever your feelings may be, do God's Will ; keep His commandments ; do good to others ; work out your own salvation with fear and trembling ; press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus ; remembering always, that "*now* is the accepted time, *now* is the day of salvation" (2 Cor. vi. 2).

For, in that Great Day, He will come as Saviour no longer, but as Judge.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### HEAVEN—WHAT IS IT ?

MANY people have misleading notions about Heaven. Some of us have been brought up to think of Heaven as a place far above the sky, where God is present in some special way, and where the righteous will enjoy eternal happiness after death.

This is doubtless true, as far as it goes. We are indeed taught in the Bible to say that Our Lord *came down from* Heaven, and, when His work on earth was done, *ascended up* where He was before. We are taught there that Heaven is a place where God is and where the Holy Angels are, and where we shall at last be, if we love Him.

But this is hardly half the truth. For Heaven is not only a Place. *It is a State.* And a State, or Condition, need have nothing to do with place. In this sense Heaven is not far away. It is everywhere or anywhere. It has nothing to do with "place" at all. It is as much all round us, it is as much inside us, as it is far away beyond the stars.

I have begun, you see, by stating something very hard to understand. Let me try to make my meaning clearer.

God has created two States of Being, which we may call Kingdoms: the *Matter-Kingdom*, or realm of matter, in which we live and move and have our being, and which is known to our bodily senses; and the *Spirit-Kingdom*, or realm of spirit, in which also we live, but which we cannot perceive with our senses, because it has to do only with that highest part within us which God breathed into us at the beginning as the Breath of Life, and which we call *Spirit*.

So that in ourselves these two Kingdoms are joined, because we are made up of Body and Spirit. One part of us belongs to the one, and the other part to the other; and we live in the midst of them both.

And yet, while every one knows that he belongs to the Matter-Kingdom, very few of us are aware of the presence of the Spirit-Kingdom at all! Or, if we are aware of it, it is not because we *perceive* it, but only because we are told of it; just as a blind man is told of the trees and houses around him.

Why is this? Why should the lower part of us be wide awake, and the higher part of us senseless? Must there not be something wrong?

Yes, there is. There is something very wrong. And for the source of mischief we must go right back to our first father, Adam himself.

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In Adam's early days, his spirit was as much alive to the things of the spirit, as was his body to the things of this world. He walked and talked with God Himself. His body and spirit did not strive and fight with one another for the mastery—they were at peace. Each perceived the things around it, and lived in agreement with the other.

But there came an evil day, when God's Enemy came and spoiled this perfect picture of peace. He caused Adam to do something for the pleasure of his body which was against God's Law, and so upset the balance in which Adam's body and spirit had lived.

From this time forward the body and spirit of man became, in a way, enemies, instead of friends. The body rose in rebellion against the spirit, and mastered it. So that in all Adam's descendants the nice balance, which God had poised, became disturbed.

And as the Body grew prouder and more selfish, the Spirit grew duller, and weaker, and more dead; just as when the wheels of a watch become more and more choked with dirt and dust, the mainspring, which causes the wheels to work, loses more and more its old power over them, and is in danger of stopping altogether.

It was to mend this mischief, and restore this old balance between body and spirit which had become spoilt through the first Adam, that the Second Adam came into the world.



For this purpose He founded a Spiritual Kingdom upon a new plan, and made it possible for men, by becoming members of that Kingdom, to bring back Body and Spirit into their proper places.

The Body, He said, was to be brought under by obedience, and fasting, and self-denial; while the Spirit was to be fed and nourished in that Kingdom by Spiritual Food Which He Himself would give.

And to-day, if our spirits are dull and blind, it is because we have not done our duty as subjects of that Kingdom. It is because we have thought too much of our bodies, and put them first in all things, as our parents, and their parents, did before us.

So that our bodies are pampered like spoilt children, and our spirits are starved like paupers; and the inner senses, by which we were meant to see and feel the Kingdom of Spirit, are become dull and sluggish. We see chairs and tables, but we do not see the Finger of God; we hear one another talking, but we do not hear the Voice of God.

Even if we did our whole duty here, we could not yet expect to be fully alive to the spiritual world around us. We could not yet, for instance, see our Guardian Angels, or hear them speak. The mischief is too deep-seated, too long-standing. It will take much work, much time, to heal. A lifelong disease is not cured in a day.

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But, for all that, we are living, as I said, in the midst of the Kingdom of Spirit, and daily moving through it. If our spiritual eyes could be opened, we should be surprised. It may be that the room in which you are sitting at this moment is full of spiritual beings.

There are passages in the Bible which will show you what I mean. On one occasion God the Father spoke to Our Lord from Heaven in answer to His prayer. And S. John (xii. 29) tells us that "the people that stood by, and heard it, said that it thundered: others said, An angel spake to Him."

In this story you have several stages of spiritual deafness.

Some of these people, as S. John's words seem to hint, heard nothing at all.

Others, not quite so bound up in the body, heard a rumbling sound like thunder.

Others, again, could make out that the sound was a voice of some kind—"an angel spake to Him."

But only Jesus heard the Words, and knew Whence they came.

Again, when S. Paul was converted, he says (Acts xxii. 9), "They that were with me saw indeed the light, and were afraid; but they heard not the Voice of Him that spake to me."

Thus you see that it is not because the Spiritual Kingdom is far off that we do not perceive it. *It is*

*because there is something the matter with ourselves.* We are like deaf people at a concert of sweet voices, or blind people in the midst of beautiful scenery.

It is not that we need to go a long way off to enjoy the Kingdom of Heaven. It is here. When we are perfect, Heaven will open on our eyes, as it did on S. Stephen's, when he saw the Heavens "opened, and the Son of Man standing on the right hand of God" (Acts vii. 56).

It is a change in *ourselves* that we need. Our Lord said (S. Luke xvii. 20, 21), "The Kingdom of God cometh not with observation: neither shall they say, 'Lo here!' or 'Lo there!' for, behold, the Kingdom of God is within you."

We are told that Elisha had a young servant, with whom he was once standing and looking down upon the hosts of Syria encamped against Israel. And the young man was dismayed, and said to his master "Alas, my master! how shall we do?" And Elisha answered, "Fear not: for they that be with us are more than they that be with them."

And then Elisha prayed, and said, "Lord, open his eyes, that he may see." And "the Lord opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha" (2 Kings vi. 15-17).

That is what we need, before we can perceive the

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Spiritual Kingdom—to *have our eyes opened*. That is what we need, above all, before we can see the King Himself, Almighty God.

For this reason we are taken out of the Kingdom of Flesh while here on earth, and born again into the Kingdom of God, in Holy Baptism; for Our Lord said, "Except a man be born again, he *cannot see* the Kingdom of God."

Baptism, which was called in the early Church by the beautiful name of "Illumination," is the first opening of our eyes upon the road to Heaven. We are then first put into that Kingdom, in the midst of which stands, to greet us at the end of our journey, the City of God. And, upon the way, our spirits are supplied with fresh grace, to wean them from their dulness, to train them for Heaven and for God.

This training is long and severe. The more idly, the more listlessly we set to work about it, the longer it will take. But if we do our part in it, God will do His. He will continue it through this world, and through the world after death. "He which hath begun a good work in us will perform it until the Day of Jesus Christ" (Phil. i. 6).

The end of it all will be what we call Heaven. Before we can reach that end, our bodies must be brought under the control of our spirits. Not that our bodies are bad things in themselves, or that they

need to be *destroyed*. They only need to be taught their place—and their place is Second.

For neither our bodies nor our spirits could have any place in Heaven as they are at present. They would not enjoy it. And, which is worse, they would prevent others from enjoying it, by spreading sin and disorder all around them.

Therefore the Church teaches us to fast. In her wisdom she would have us “mortify our members” (Col. iii. 5), “keep our bodies in subjection” (1 Cor. ix. 27), to teach them their place.

When we feed and indulge our bodily desires, we are putting Heaven further off from us. When we deny ourselves, and say “No” to our lower nature, we are hastening the time for which Our Lord bids us pray, “Thy Kingdom come.”

## CHAPTER IX.

### HEAVEN—WHAT SHALL WE DO THERE ?

Now, as you well know, I cannot give you any certain description of the joys of Heaven. We could not grasp or understand such a description here, even if it were given us. "It doth not yet appear what we shall be."

Yet there are one or two matters in which God has given us a *sure hope*.

We know, first, that the crowning joy of Heaven will be the *Sight of God*. "Now we see through a glass, darkly ; but then face to Face" (1 Cor. xiii. 12).

This depends especially upon Purity. Our Lord speaks of it as the great reward of Purity : "Blessed are the pure in heart : for they shall see God" (S. Matt. v. 8). None can hope to behold God's glory, until they be quite purged of fleshly sin.

And, until we see God, we shall never be *perfect*. For, seeing God, we shall be "changed into the same Image from glory to glory" (2 Cor. iii. 18). A man grows like that on which he gazes. Man and wife,



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living long together, are said to grow alike. So S. John says (1 S. John iii. 2), "We know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is:" that is, our seeing Him as He is will cause us to grow like Him. The more His glories unfold to us, the more like Him we shall grow. To see Him will be to see Purity, and to grow ever purer; to see Truth, and to grow ever truer; to see Love, and to grow ever more loving.

This is what the Bible means when it says that we shall be "made perfect" in Heaven. Notice what perfect means. It does not mean great, or noble, but *finished, made through and through*. To be perfect is *to be quite as God meant us to be in all ways*.

A thing may be very poor and lowly, and yet may be perfect. A worm may be perfect, just as a lily or an angel may be perfect, if it be complete in all its parts. God never made it to be anything more than a worm. And He never made us to be anything more than men or women. But He meant us to be perfect men and women.

So Our Lord said. He said, "Be ye perfect, even as your Father which is in Heaven is perfect" (S. Matt. v. 48). Our Lord did not mean, "Be as good, or as great, as your Father in Heaven." This would have been unreasonable. He meant, "Be complete in yourselves, as God is complete in Himself." And this completeness

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means freedom from flaw or fault, freedom from Sin, which is the whole purpose of our Redemption: "He shall save His people *from their sins*" (S. Matt. i. 21).

That is Heaven: not merely getting scot-free from punishment and being comfortable for ever, but being saved from Sin, being made pure, and whole, and like God, through and through. This is the first thing.

The salvation from punishment will come by itself. "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (S. Matt. vi. 33). And the means by which we may reach this Heaven, Perfection, is the Life of the Cross. "By One Offering He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified" (Heb. x. 14).

When we are thus perfect, *we shall have strong, pure wills*. Our wills here are weak. They came to us weak, from weak-willed parents; and we have made them weaker still, by giving way to temptation again and again. They are out of line with God's Will, and so inclined to evil.

But when man becomes perfect, his Will will be master of his senses, and it will be a good master, because it will be in agreement with God's Will. There will be no struggle between body and mind, no "law in my members warring against the law of my mind" (Rom. vii. 23), for mind and body will be at one. There will be no temptation there; and even if there

were, it would not be heeded. "They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain (Isa. xi. 9).

It seems to follow that we shall have wonderful powers, which we have not now. Sin being taken away, we shall be in full agreement and fellowship with the spiritual world. The "spiritual bodies" which we shall take to Heaven with us will have, in their own lesser way, the powers and virtues of Our Lord's Spiritual Body, for which see Chapter V.

We cannot, of course, say exactly what or how great these powers will be. But I expect that we shall be able to move any distance, for instance, without effort; that we shall be able to pass through solid things; that we shall be able to exchange our thoughts with one another without being obliged to speak: and, in fact, that in all ways the body will in a moment answer and obey the bidding of the soul within it.

I suppose there are not many of us who have not had strange hints and foretastes of powers not enjoyed here,—in dreams by night, and in day-dreams too. We have dreamed of indescribable splendours, of floating in the air, of talking without speech to those we love. Perhaps these are shadows of future glory, flappings, as it were, of the spirit's wings against the bars of her present earthly cage.

The Bible and common sense both teach that we shall know each other in Heaven. I believe it is sometimes

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thought that Heaven will be peopled with a crowd of shadowy, unrecognisable beings, all alike, and that human love, the greatest and holiest of God's blessings, will be quite swallowed up and lost, as a thing unworthy of so sacred a place!

One cannot surely believe this to be true. Holiness does not mean loss of character. If Heaven meant that we were in any way to cease to be ourselves, the long and tedious work of sanctification would be wasted.

You sometimes hear people say of one who is dead, "He is an angel now." This is utterly contrary to God's teaching. We shall never be angels, any more than we shall be animals. Angels are a different race of beings altogether from men and women.

We shall always throughout eternity be *ourselves*. Each will keep his own peculiar character—purged indeed, but still and for ever his own. If I am to cease to be "I," and you are to cease to be "you," then Heaven is not worth striving for, and all interest in the future life is gone.

No; Our Lord says, "Lay up *for yourselves* treasures in Heaven" (S. Matt. vi. 20). Each of us has a Name written in the Book of Life (Phil. iv. 3), perhaps the Christian name given to us here, the name which denotes himself and no other. Or that "New Name" promised to "him that overcometh" (Rev. ii. 17). Our

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Lord says of Himself as the Shepherd, that He “ calleth His own sheep by name ” (S. John x. 3). By this name we shall be known to God, and doubtless to our brethren, when we come to “ know, even as we are known ” (1 Cor. xiii. 12).

And, thus knowing and known, to God and to one another in God, *we shall dwell for ever in perfect love*. There will be no jealousy, or hatred, or dislike, for God will be the first thought of each, and that very fact will make perfect union. Thank God that Jealousy, that most abominable and ruinous of passions, will not be suffered to mar the flawless harmony of the City of God.

Nor will there be any selfish friendship. There will be no splitting-up of that Heavenly society of the redeemed into groups or knots of people who care only for one another, and not for those outside. There will be none of that violent personal affection which we know here, and which lasts, alas, sometimes so short a while.

Love in Heaven will not be passion. It will be the Love S. Paul meant when he spoke of “ Charity.” It will be calm, and deep, and strong, and even. It will flow out from God through all hearts, and back again to Him; for God, as I said, will be the First Thought of all; and all, loving the same Being, will love one another in and for Him. Love will be like a flame, at which other flames are kindled, but itself grows not less.

Here, love stops at the creature, and loves too often for

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the creature's sake ; there, creature will see in creature a mirror to give back the loveliness of the Creator, and will love him because he is "in Christ," because he, too, is a child of Almighty God, Who has "knit together His elect in one communion and fellowship in the mystical Body of His Son Christ our Lord" (Collect for All Saints).

In Heaven, too, we shall see the Blessed Saints face to face. They, who have helped us with their prayers and protection in this life, will join in blest communion with us there. There we shall see the gentle face of Mary, Mother of God.

Still, though Heaven will be indeed a perfect "Communion of Saints," we must put out of our minds the common notion that it will be the same thing for all, or that all will have the same reward. People think of Heaven as a sort of examination, which we have just got to "pass," and no more. The great thing, they think, is to get there : once there, there will be a dead level of blessedness for all.

How can this be ? Is it not God's law always, that there are *ranks* of creatures ? Can we think that the great and holy Saints of whom we read in the Bible and in Church History will reap no higher blessedness than we ourselves ? No. Our Lord says that in His Father's House are "many mansions" (S. John xiv. 2). And He speaks of "a prophet's reward," and of "a righteous



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man's reward" (S. Matt. x. 41). And S. Paul says that God giveth the seed "a body as it hath pleased Him;" that "all flesh is not the same flesh;" that there are different kinds of glory; and that "one star differeth from another star in glory" (1 Cor. xv. 38-41).

Can we think that the many thousands of "religious," who in monasteries and convents have devoted their whole lives to God, will reap no more special reward than the worldling who is just saved through a death-bed repentance and a long course of experience in the after-state? Of two of the monastic "vows" we are plainly told that they raise a man or woman into a higher state. Of Poverty we read, "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!" (S. Mark x. 23). And of Chastity S. Paul says, "It is good for a man so to be" (1 Cor. vii. 26). And we know that "Obedience" is the very measure of salvation. Shall not some special blessing be reserved for those who keep the three in their highest entirety?

"But I thought that our Lord said, in the Parable of the Labourers in the Vineyard, 'I will give unto this last, even as unto thee'?" (S. Matt. xx. 14).

Yes, but in the Parable of the Pounds (S. Luke xix. 17-19), the servant who gained ten pounds in interest upon his one pound received ten cities as his reward while he that gained five received only five. The Parable you have quoted is not meant to imply that all will have

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exactly the same reward. It means that all will have the "Penny," which is Salvation, as a *free gift of God*, not as *hire* for their work here, as I will explain directly.

Be sure that he who has lived nearest to God here, will live nearest to His Throne in Heaven. S. Paul says (1 Cor. iii. 13-15) that "every man's work shall be made manifest;" that one shall "receive a reward," while another shall be saved "so as by fire."

And in Rev. xiv. 4, S. John tells us of a band of a hundred and forty-four thousand who are the "first-fruits unto God and to the Lamb," who are "virgins," and "follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth." "These," we are told, "were not defiled," had not fallen from perfect innocence; and we must surely believe that, though God gives great glory to the "sinner that repenteth," yet He will give still higher glory to him who has kept, so far as man may keep, his innocence.

Compare the reward of the Apostles, who shall "sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel" (S. Matt. xix. 28), with the state, though redeemed, of him who is cast into prison, and "shall not come out thence till he has paid the uttermost farthing" (S. Matt. v. 26).

Now, when I say that there will be a scale of reward in Heaven, I do not mean that Heaven will simply be a payment won by ourselves according to our good

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actions; for we know that “not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His Mercy He saved us” (Tit. iii. 5); and Our Lord says, “When ye shall have done all, say, We are unprofitable servants” (S. Luke xvii. 10).

Christians do not work for a wage due to them from God. It is the *Sinner* who works for a wage; Heaven is a gift. “The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord” (Rom. vi. 23). It is not our own merits, for we have none and can have none of ourselves, but our use of Christ’s merits, that shall save us.

But I do most certainly mean that he who uses these merits best, he who *works best with God* for his own salvation, will be saved best; just as the servant who used his lord’s money best, received the best reward.

“Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain” (1 Cor. ix. 24). S. Paul does not hold out the *getting to the goal* as the only important thing, but the *manner of running*.

It is not that God will give us Heaven just because He is pleased with us. Heaven will be the *result*, rather than the *payment*, of our lives. *We are making our own Heaven*. We are carrying it about with us here, or the beginnings of it. “The Kingdom of God is within you.”

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And not only will there be different degrees, but different *kinds* of blessedness.

Take the cases of a very learned man, and a simple labourer. The one has lived a life, say, no better and no worse than the other. Both, let us suppose, are saved.

But their joys in Heaven will be different, according to their different natures and bringings-up. Each will see Almighty God in the light which most agrees with his own being.

God does not appeal to all good people in the same way, in this life ; nor will He in Heaven. One will take a greater delight in understanding God's mysteries ; another will feel a keener joy in God's presence ; a third will take special pleasure in telling forth the story of God's love to others. God will be to each one of us the particular kind of happiness which is best fitted to make him entirely happy.

I am afraid that the popular notions of the joys of Heaven are apt to be somewhat childish. Children generally think of the company of the redeemed in Heaven as standing round a throne in white robes, crowned, and with palm-branches in their hands, or playing and singing eternally with a harp.

All this is beautiful, and Biblical too. But there is a certain amount of parable in it. It is intended to teach simple minds the great truth, that Heaven means praise, and the presence of God. And we, who are

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grown men and women, should get behind this picture to the truth that underlies it. We should understand that Heaven means something more than an eternal sacred concert—that it means *righteousness*.

And though that great act of righteousness, praise, will certainly form a chief part of our lives in Heaven (for how can we be with Our Redeemer without adoring Him?), yet we must not be led to suppose that there will be any sameness, or lack of occupation, in the Life Everlasting.

It would be an insult to God to think it. Must we work here while we are imperfect, and when we are perfect find nothing to do? No. Each will have some occupation, suited best to his own character, by which he may glorify God or serve his fellows.

And though “he that is entered into his rest hath ceased from his own works”—that is, from the toil of striving after Heaven (Heb. iv. 10),—yet S. Paul gives us a hint of what the chief occupation of Heaven will be: “That unto the principalities and powers in Heavenly places might be known, *by the Church*, the manifold wisdom of God” (Eph. iii. 10). That is to say, the redeemed in Heaven will be privileged to tell the bright beings, who have never fallen, the story of their own redemption. What a glorious task, to proclaim to Angels what the *ransoming* Love of Jesus has been! For they have never known it.

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Now, lastly, let me put a question to you. Suppose you are a worldly, godless person ; and suppose you were taken from your life of care and pleasures, and suddenly brought into this state of being which I have been describing. Would you like it ?

No, I don't think you would. It would dazzle and confound you. You would feel, to use the common saying, like a "fish out of water," or like a ploughboy who suddenly finds himself at Court. Many of the people who sing in Church "Jerusalem, my happy home, thy joys when shall I see ?" would not at all care to go there, if it came to the point. They would far prefer to be left where they are.

None but the perfectly sanctified can desire Heaven with their whole soul. Heaven is the society of Almighty God ; and in that Society worldly and sinful hearts can find no delight, any more than a child who has done wrong, and is not sorry for it, can care for the society of the father or mother whom he has offended.

They would be uneasy and weary in Heaven ; they would hanker back after the world and their sins, just as the Children of Israel hankered after the "feshpots of Egypt" (Exod. xvi. 3) on their journey to the Promised Land.

No one could long for Heaven who did not love God. He has lost his appetite for Heaven, as a sick person loses his appetite for healthy food.



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If you are like this, you have much training to undergo. Do not imagine, as some do, that you have but to repent on your deathbed, and you will float comfortably away to Heaven when you die, and a fair robe of “imputed” righteousness which is not your own will be put upon you, and so, “clothed in the merits of Christ,” you will stand for ever in His sight, and all will be forgiven and forgotten!

Do not soothe yourself with the thought that *any* righteousness is going to admit you to Heaven, which is not *wholly your own*, or, rather, Christ’s made wholly yours. There will be no “whited sepulchres,” no beautiful robe worn over filthy rags, in the Life Everlasting. The King’s Daughter must be “all glorious *within*” (Ps. xlv. 13).

What you are to look at, you will have to be through and through. It is “*Christ in you*, the hope of glory” (Col. i. 27)—glory within, the hope of glory without,—not Christ put over you, you being most un-Christlike underneath.

The man who says, “I am saved; I rest upon the finished work of Christ upon the Cross,” and continues in his sins, is in a very bad way indeed. It is a poor sort of salvation that can be dishonest, or untruthful, or impure. God did not give His Son to die for us that we might dress ourselves up in His merits, and pretend to be righteous. He did so, “that we might *be made*

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the righteousness of God in Him" (2 Cor. v. 21). And the great object of the Purging-state beyond the grave, is to completely and finally conform us to that image of Divine Righteousness, and so to make us utterly desire and deserve God.

So, by Divine wisdom, Heaven will be given to none who do not fully desire it, and none will fully desire it until they fully deserve it.

How, then, can we blame Almighty God for refusing Heaven to those who go on still in their wickedness? How should God give His great reward to those who do not desire it? For this would render the whole plan of the Atonement useless. It would mean that God must do one or other of two things: either He must "give that which is holy unto the dogs" (S. Matt. vii. 6), or else He must sanctify them by force. And we know that God will do neither of these things.

What, then, will be the lot of these unhappy lost ones?

The following chapter will answer this question.

## CHAPTER X.

### HELL—WHO WILL GO THERE ?

HELL is a subject of which we know little more than the awful fact of its existence.

When God gives His children certain laws, He is never weary of telling them of the rewards He will shower upon them if they obey. But He is slow to draw pictures of the punishments He has in store for them if they do not obey.

Just as when an earthly father makes a rule for his child, he tells it that if it disobeys it will be punished. But he does not dwell upon the punishment. It would be unhealthy, unwise ; it would almost suggest the idea of disobedience.

And for this very reason we are not told much about Hell. Nor have we any right to be curious about it. We must just receive what God has told us about it with quiet awe, and not doubt or question His word.

Yet I am sorry to say that this is one of the very subjects upon which men have most "thought for themselves," putting themselves in God's place, judging His

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ways by their ways and His thoughts by their thoughts ; and many hard words have been said against the Church for her teaching upon the matter.

But where does the Church get her teaching about Hell ?

Directly from Our Lord Himself. It is Our Lord, in His own recorded words, and in other scriptures, Who speaks the most plainly and the most severely upon this subject. Perhaps there is no doctrine which the Church teaches so distinctly "Bible in hand."

The Church cannot alter her Lord's words, or cut them down to fit modern ideas. When He has said "eternal punishment," the Church, though she is tender and loving, and shudders at the thought, cannot say anything else.

When a good father threatens a certain punishment to his disobedient child, the mother will be acting very wrongly if, through mistaken love for the child, she tells it that its father will not do as he has said.

And God is our Father, and the Church is our Mother ; and whatever our Father has promised or threatened, our Mother is bound in honour, dearly as she loves us, to hold out to us unchanged. It would be acting Satan's part to say, "Ye shall not surely die" (Gen. iii. 4).

And we, as her children, are bound to listen and believe. For the point is, not what we conceive God's

mercy or God's justice would do or ought to do, but what He has told us that He will do. Our notions of mercy and justice may seem very fine and great to ourselves; but they are warped by sin.

We should avoid many pitfalls if we could remember, in this as in so many other matters, that Religion is not an invention of our own, according to our ideas of right and wrong, but *a Revelation from God*.

Now, the first thing for us to learn about Hell is—

*Whom will God send there?*

I can tell you at once, and without a shadow of doubt, whom God will *not* send there. He will not send any who do not themselves choose to go. He will not send any in whom there remains a spark of grace, or goodness, or love.

He will not send any for whom His Justice will allow His Mercy to find the smallest chance of escape. He will not send any who are not utterly godless, hopeless, and impenitent to the end.

For we are told that Christ is the Saviour of all men (1 S. Tim. iv. 10); that God will not quench the smoking flax, nor break the bruised reed (S. Matt. xii. 20); that He willeth not that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance (2 S. Pet. iii. 9); and that He "made not death, neither hath He pleasure in the destruction of the living; for He created all things, that they might have their being" (Wisdom. i. 13, 14).

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But there comes a time in the life of man when he makes a decided choice either for God or against Him. If he goes on deliberately rebelling against God, and refusing His offers of Grace, there must come a time when God takes him at his word, accepts his refusal, and withholds the grace which he has despised.

We are told of those who have been "once enlightened, and have tasted of the Heavenly Gift," that "it is impossible, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put Him to an open shame" (Heb. vi. 4-6).

Now many persons, out of a really generous heart, have found themselves unable to believe that God will ever send even such people as these to Hell.

To this it may be answered, that God, strictly speaking, will not send any one to Hell. *Those who go there will have sent themselves there.* God says of Hell, that "ungodly men with their works and words called it to them" (Wisd. i. 16).

I think that the whole of the dreadful meaning of Hell is put in three words in Acts i. 25, where we are told of Judas, that he fell by transgression, that he might go to "*his own place.*"

That is just the case with those unhappy lost ones of whom we are thinking. They make Hell *their own place.* They choose it for themselves. They are



suicides—executioners of their own souls and bodies. God gave them a free will, and showed them the right way; Christ died for them, and offered them the grace of His Death: and they wilfully and with their eyes open refused Him, and chose evil.

God, as we have seen, would not interfere with their free will. He would have drawn them with all the cords of His mighty Love. But they refused it to the end, and, drawing to themselves the evil, so worked and wove it into their beings that they grew one with it; and Hell became the only place, the only state, in which they could exist at all.

Hell is, to be perfectly evil. It is the outcome, the result, the last and endless stage of that growth in wickedness which is spoken of in such awful words by S. James (i. 15): "When lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin; and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death."

Indeed, we may say that these souls are, in a sense, already in Hell, while here on earth. They are making Hell in themselves, just as the righteous are making Heaven in themselves. They are beginning to carry their Hell about with them here. Remember what the Communion Service says of impenitent sinners; not "Cursed be he," or "Cursed shall he be," but "Cursed is he" that does all the evil things there spoken of.

You must not suppose that God is going to cast

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sinner into Hell simply because they have committed certain sins for which He is angry with them. They will go to Hell for the same reason as that for which the righteous will go to Heaven—not so much for what they have done, as *for what they are*.

When a man is at length righteous through and through, there is no place for him but Heaven. When a man is evil through and through, there is no place for him but Hell.

It is not a question of the mercy of God. Mercy has had its day. Law steps in now—the Law of Self-Destruction, as sure in its workings as the law that says in this life, “If you abuse your body, you will fall sick, and die.”

It is not, then, merely that God is enraged with sinners, and punishes them to gratify His wrath. He is, indeed, angry; but His anger is a very different thing from the anger that we know.

When we are angry, though we may call it “righteous anger,” there is always a certain amount of pride, of Self, mixed up with it. But God’s anger is the Working of the Law of Right and Wrong.

God’s anger is just another name for God’s Laws revenging themselves upon the men who have despised them. It is not the passion of a creature, but the offended justice of a Divine Person working through His own laws.

So that a man's Hell is his sin. He is changed into the likeness of his sin, as the righteous will be changed into the image of God. We are told of evil that "ungodly men made a covenant with it, because they are worthy to take part with it" (Wisd. i. 16).

To have reached this state is to have committed the "sin unto death" of which S. John speaks (1 S. John v. 16), and the "sin against the Holy Ghost," which, Our Lord says, "hath never forgiveness" (S. Mark iii. 29).

This is not so much a sin as a *state*. It is an utter refusal of God, a choice of all evil for ever, so that there is not one spark of godliness or of good left in the man, and he becomes a living sin.

We must never torment ourselves with anxiety, however, lest we should already have committed this crowning horror. The very fact of our having any care at all about the matter would show that we cannot have fallen into hopeless hardness of heart. But we must remember with awe that this dread possibility lies before all who "sin wilfully."

Such is the awful condition that must end in Hell. We trust that nothing short of this will lead there. We are quite sure that God will not doom one single soul to Hell, unless it be fully deserved.

If there be one tittle of the better nature left, we trust that the Father will spare, as He promised once to spare a whole city for the sake of ten righteous men

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(Gen. xviii. 32). He will not say, "Depart from Me, ye cursed," until there shall be nothing else to say.

Heaven is, to be wholly righteous: Hell is, to be wholly unrighteous. Heaven is, to have come out into perfect good: Hell is, to be evil through and through, and to be aware of it. Heaven is, to see God: Hell is, not to see Him.

So that the Bible calls Hell "Death." It is the "Second Death" (Rev. xx. 14). Just as Heaven is Eternal Life, so Hell is Eternal Death. It is "to die eternally." It is "outer darkness," the darkness which men have chosen instead of Light, and must dwell there.

And just as we saw that, having become men, we must "put away childish things" (1 Cor. xiii. 11) in our notions of Heaven, so with Hell. Children and untaught persons think of Hell as the Church never thought of it. They think of it as a place of endless torture in actual fire, where the lost will be for ever tormented by devils. Many of us have seen pictures of Hell, in which the wicked are being pitchforked by horned and hideous demons among flames; and the demons seem to be enjoying their triumph.

I do not think that this is a just or a right idea of Hell, nor do I think that the Church is answerable for it. It has been invented by persons who look upon bodily pain as the greatest evil, and upon sin, and

separation from God, as small matters beside it. And those who dislike the Church have taken it up and charged her with it, whether ignorantly or not; as though the Church thought of her God as a cruel Avenger, who enjoyed vengeance.

Our Lord does certainly speak of "hell-fire" (S. Matt. v. 22), and so does the Athanasian Creed. "Fire" is the name by which punishment is constantly spoken of throughout the Bible; and we cannot escape from the belief that Hell means punishment.

But there is a worse feature in that punishment than any mere *torture*. That feature is *exclusion*—a thing far more dreadful to a Christian than any pain. Hell is, *to be shut out from God*, which is worse than pain—for it is Death.

Wherever the *place* of Hell may be, the *state* of it is, to be wicked, and to be for ever with wicked companions, apart from God. This dread penalty will be differently fitted to each different person, according to the sin in which he has lived. His sin, and the knowledge of it, and the knowledge that he is impenitent, and has missed the last of the many chances God gave him, and so is shut out from God's sight—that will be his Hell.

As to the "fire" spoken of in the Bible, it has been said that this means the Love of God, acting terribly upon those who would have none of it. For God is

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both the Fire of Love, and a "Consuming Fire" (Heb. xii. 29). Our Lord shall baptize us, says S. John Baptist, "with fire" (S. Matt. iii. 11).

And if that Fire do not purge and refine us, it must consume and destroy. God's Love, where it fails to enlighten, must burn. Where souls refuse that Love, they turn it into their own destruction; for that very Love of the sinner means hatred of the sin which destroys him; so that when a soul is so filled with sin that it becomes one with sin, God's Love must turn into hatred against it.

There are remedies which, if they cannot cure, must kill; and the bitterest drop in the cup of souls in Hell shall be the very Love which they have spurned.



## CHAPTER XI.

### IS HELL ETERNAL?

THE last question we must ask about Hell is:—

*“How long will sinners be kept there?”*

First, bear in mind, that when talking of the future life, we are in the realm, not of Time, but of Eternity.

I think this is often forgotten by good people who talk glibly about the *time* for which Hell will last. We must remember that what we call “time” in this life is merely a measurement invented for our convenience and ruled by the heavenly bodies; that past, present, and future are not with God what they are with us; and that we have no right to be sure that what we call “time” exists in the same way, in the spiritual world. Just as we saw that the spiritual kingdom was not a kingdom of “place,” so, it may be, it is not a kingdom of “time” either.

Therefore, though we are bound to use human words and ideas in speaking of Hell, yet we must not forget that those words and ideas do, after all, only fit the subject up to a certain point; and should be the less

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curious and familiar, and the more careful and reverent, in dealing with the eternal mysteries of a God with Whom "one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day."

With this understanding, I will go on to try to answer the question.

The only answer I am able to give is this: *Hell will last as long for sinners as Heaven will last for the saved.* We are told of no end either to the one or the other. Our Lord speaks of both as "everlasting." In S. Matt. xxv. 46 He says of the lost, "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment; but the righteous into life eternal."

I do not doubt that every Priest in the pulpit, who teaches this doctrine about Hell to his people, would give much to be able to put it otherwise. But God does not call His Priests to preach what doctrine they like best, but what they have learnt of Him.

And God, in the Person of His Son Jesus Christ, has taught us that Hell, like Heaven, is "everlasting;" that "their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched" (S. Mark ix. 44).

The same is the doctrine of the Church, as in the Athanasian Creed: "They that have done evil (shall go) into everlasting fire." Heaven and Hell are both the "Life Everlasting." I dare not teach anything else.

"Then do you mean that, if a wicked man in Hell,

after thousands of years, were to repent and turn to God, God would not receive him?"

I am quite sure that God would. I am quite sure that God will not punish a single soul one instant longer than it deserves. I am quite sure that if a soul in Hell could be found to repent, God would pardon it.

But are you sure that you are not imagining an impossible thing?

I said above, that God would not send any to Hell in whom remained a spark of grace, or goodness, or love. If a lost soul, after any number of years that you can fancy, could repent and turn to God, that soul would never have been sent to Hell. It would not have died hopeless. *And Hell is only for hopeless cases.* God will send there none of whom His Wisdom is not quite sure that, under no possible circumstances, could they, or would they, repent.

Hell is only for those who have killed in themselves the Image of God. No *lost* soul will turn, for a *lost* soul cannot turn. If grace and love failed to turn it here, then surely wrath will not turn it hereafter. It is guilty of what Our Lord called "eternal sin" (in the passage S. Mark iii. 29, which is wrongly translated "in danger of eternal damnation"), that is, sin eternal in its effects.

Grace could have saved it, at one time; but it would have none of it. Now the day of grace is over, and it

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has chosen a graceless Hell with its eyes open. Now, not even the love of God can save it, for it has used its awful power of Free-will to cast that Love away and make it useless.

What, then, shall God do? Speaking with reverence, what *can* God do? Our Lord said of Judas, that awful pattern of the lost, that "it had been good for that man if he had not been born" (S. Matt. xxvi. 24). Now, if, after countless millions of years, the lost soul of Judas could be admitted to the sight of God, it could never have been truly said of him that it were better for him if he had not been born.

"But should not a merciful God give the lost in Hell a new trial, like that which they had on earth, and offer them fresh grace, to help them repent?"

It might seem a blessed thing if this could be!

But suppose this doctrine were preached. You can always test Truth by its fruits. What would follow?

Men and women would say, and with some reason, "You tell us that in Hell we shall receive another chance of conversion to God. Then we will enjoy all the pleasure of sin here, while we may. Time enough to repent in punishment, when we will make our peace with a long-suffering God, and have all the delights of Heaven into the bargain, without troubling ourselves to undergo all the labour and self-denial which you say is necessary for a Christian in this world." Or, if they did

not actually *say* this, or even admit it to themselves, they would feel it and act upon it.

Where, then, would be the use of all the lives of the saints and holy men who have loved and laboured here, if, after all, salvation were a mere matter of time—if all the difference between saint and sinner were this, that the one entered into light just a little *sooner* than the other? Would this be just, or wise?

No. “*Now* is the accepted time” (2 Cor. vi. 2). “The night cometh, when no man can work” (S. John ix. 4). “If we sin wilfully . . . there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking-for of judgment, and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries” (Heb. x. 26, 27).

But suppose that the lost had still some power of repentance, and God were to give them this “second chance” of which you speak.

How do you know that they would take it? If they did not take the first chance, what reason have you to suppose that they would take a second? What need, what use, for a second chance, when one chance failed?

They have been “weighed in the balances, and found wanting” (Dan. v. 27). Where is the use, alas, of a second “weighing”? And if a second chance, why not a third, and a fourth? why not an endless number of chances?

So you see that this notion of God, which seems at

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first sight like mercy, is found to be but mockery, when you look into it.

“But is not God almighty? Could not He *compel* these lost ones to receive Him?”

I can only point you back to that keyword of the whole plan—Free-will. We have seen that God will never *force* souls to be righteous here. We may, then, be quite sure that He will not do so hereafter.

And as regards His being almighty, His almightiness does not warrant Him in breaking His own Laws. He would not then be almighty, but inconsistent. The very fact that He is God would make it impossible for Him to sanctify souls that have destroyed themselves. They have made themselves one with evil. And God cannot sanctify evil. To compel these souls to turn to Him would be to change them altogether—to destroy them and put fresh souls in their place.

“But would it not seem better for God to destroy these lost ones altogether, to put them out of existence, rather than let this Hell, these awful consequences of sin, remain for ever? Is it not like sin and evil triumphing over God in the end?”

If God were so to destroy the lost as to bring them to nothing, *that* would be indeed a Triumph of Evil. They would die the Martyrs of Satan, clinging to him and choosing him to the end. It would be no more a



victory on God's part than the act of those of whom we read in history, as burning people alive, because they did not believe certain things. It would be a victory of Satan, just as the death of the Christian Martyrs was a victory of God. You do not destroy sin by destroying the sinner. He dies cursing God, and the evil that he did lives after him.

Not so. What God has told us that He will do, be sure that is the best Triumph over Evil. Hell will be God's eternal proof and sign of His hatred against, His victory over, wickedness. All Heaven will own, and Hell itself will know, that the Judge of all the earth has "done right."

It has doubtless been very painful to you to read what I have said upon this subject.

But do not forget that it has been fully as painful for me to say it. Do not be led away by the cheap comfort of those who charge the Church with unfeeling cruelty in her teaching about Hell.

"God's mercy," they say, "could never allow such a doctrine to be true. God could never find it in His Heart."

Those who say this are, perhaps with the best intentions, mistaking their own judgment for "God's mercy." They are putting themselves in God's position, telling us what they would do in His place. But what we want to arrive at, as I said before, is not what certain

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tender-hearted persons think that God ought to do, but what God has told us that He will do.

There are many things which we may think we could do better than our Father, if we were called upon to do them. We may feel that we should have created a very different world altogether to begin with. I have often felt that myself.

But we are poor, ignorant, sinful creatures. I, for one, rejoice greatly that I am to be judged by Almighty God, rather than by the most "merciful" human being alive. "Let me fall into the hand of the Lord; but let me not fall into the hand of man" (1 Chron. xxi. 13). One would rather have God's Justice than man's "mercy," even though that Justice took the shape of punishment.

We should be careful how we use this word "mercy." People sometimes imagine it means an *overlooking* of what is wrong, a lacking the heart to punish, though punishment be deserved. This is not mercy at all, but injustice. Justice and Mercy are twin-sisters, and go together, with God. Mercy is Justice done in the kindest way.

God never "overlooks" the tiniest sin. If he forgives that sin, it is because Jesus Christ has rendered justice for the sin upon the Cross, and the sinner has made that justice his own. But if the sinner persists in his sin and in the refusal of the remedy as long as

God offers it, then he must expect, without mercy, the full reward of his sin.

Justice, one way or another, must be done upon him : merciful justice he would not have ; therefore justice must take the shape of that punishment which, for his sin, was due to him from the beginning.

Hell is the justice which was owing to us all. But God, thanks be to Him, has found a merciful way of doing us justice, by clothing Himself with our nature, and enduring in that Nature, on our behalf, the equivalent of that which we must ourselves, but for His mercy, have endured alone.

If we are determined to shut ourselves out from all union with Him in that suffering Nature, we are thrown back upon mankind's curse, and must suffer alone. For suffer we must, either with Him, or without Him. "If we suffer (with Him), we shall also reign with Him" (2 Tim. ii. 12). If we suffer without Him, it were good for us if we had not been born.

The great lesson taught us by the last Article of the Creed is this : that the Everlasting Life, for good or ill, depends upon our life here ; that we have, in fact, already entered upon it ; and that we have its issue in our own hands.

If you are horror-stricken at the thought of Hell, then shrink from hellish things, and try with God's help to win a heavenly nature.

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God has not told us about Hell to frighten us, but to warn us. Some preachers think that by drawing terrible pictures of the pains of Hell they will frighten their people into repentance. I do not believe that any one was ever saved by dread. Nor yet by the hope of reward. Perhaps fear, and the desire of happiness, may have *started* some, who were hard and bad, upon the way of repentance. But, once on that way, it has been the Hand of Love that has led them.

“ Not for the sake of winning Heaven,  
Nor of escaping Hell ;  
Not from the hope of gaining aught,  
Not seeking a reward ;  
But as Thyself hast loved me,  
O ever-loving Lord.”

So sang S. Francis Xavier. And it remains for us to fix our thoughts, not on Hell, but on the Cross ; and to try by well-made Communions, and a life lived in God's service, to form within ourselves that Christly nature which, Our Blessed Lord says, “ *hath Eternal Life.*”

And what is Eternal Life ?

It is (S. John xvii. 3) to “ *know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ Whom Thou hast sent.*”

THE END.

April 1900.

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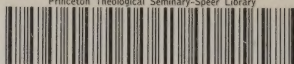
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